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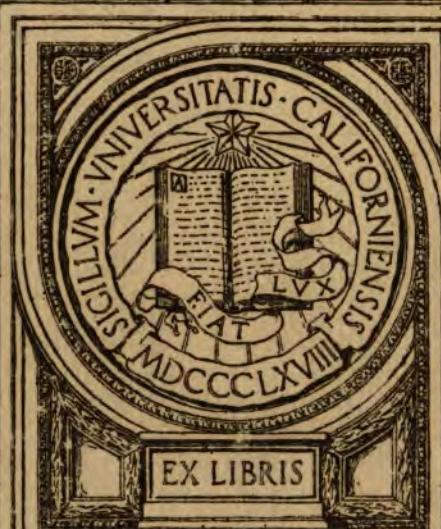
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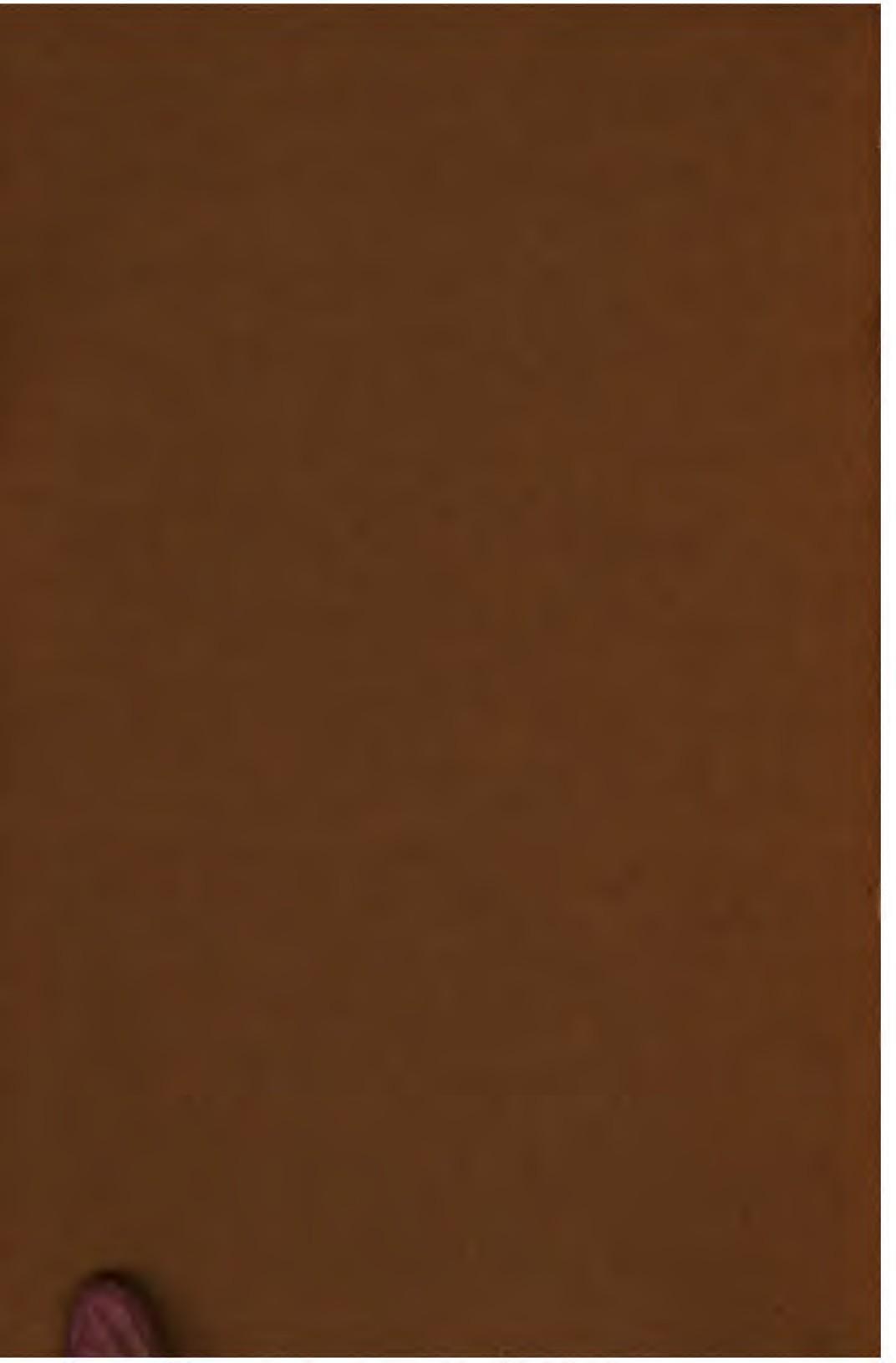
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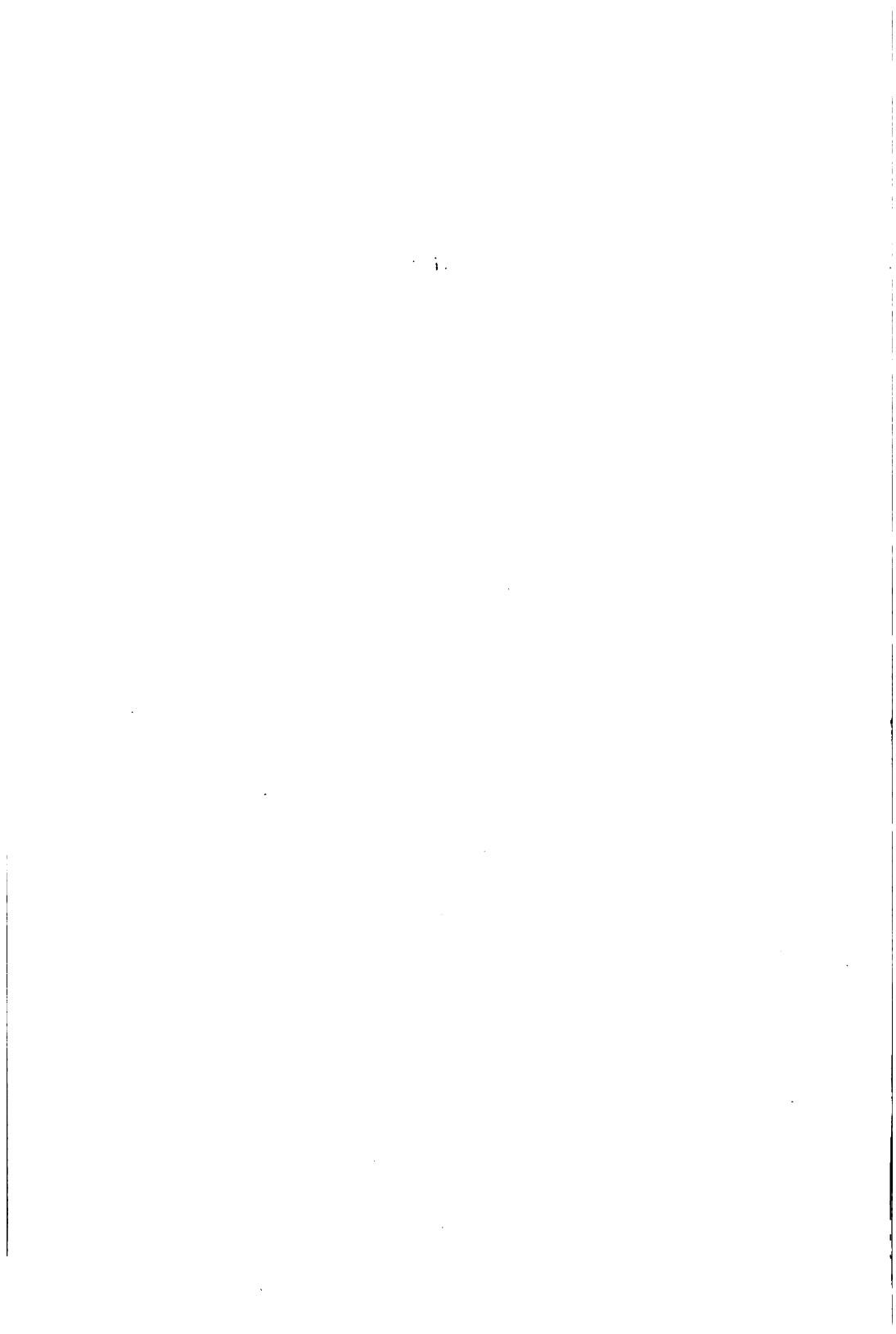


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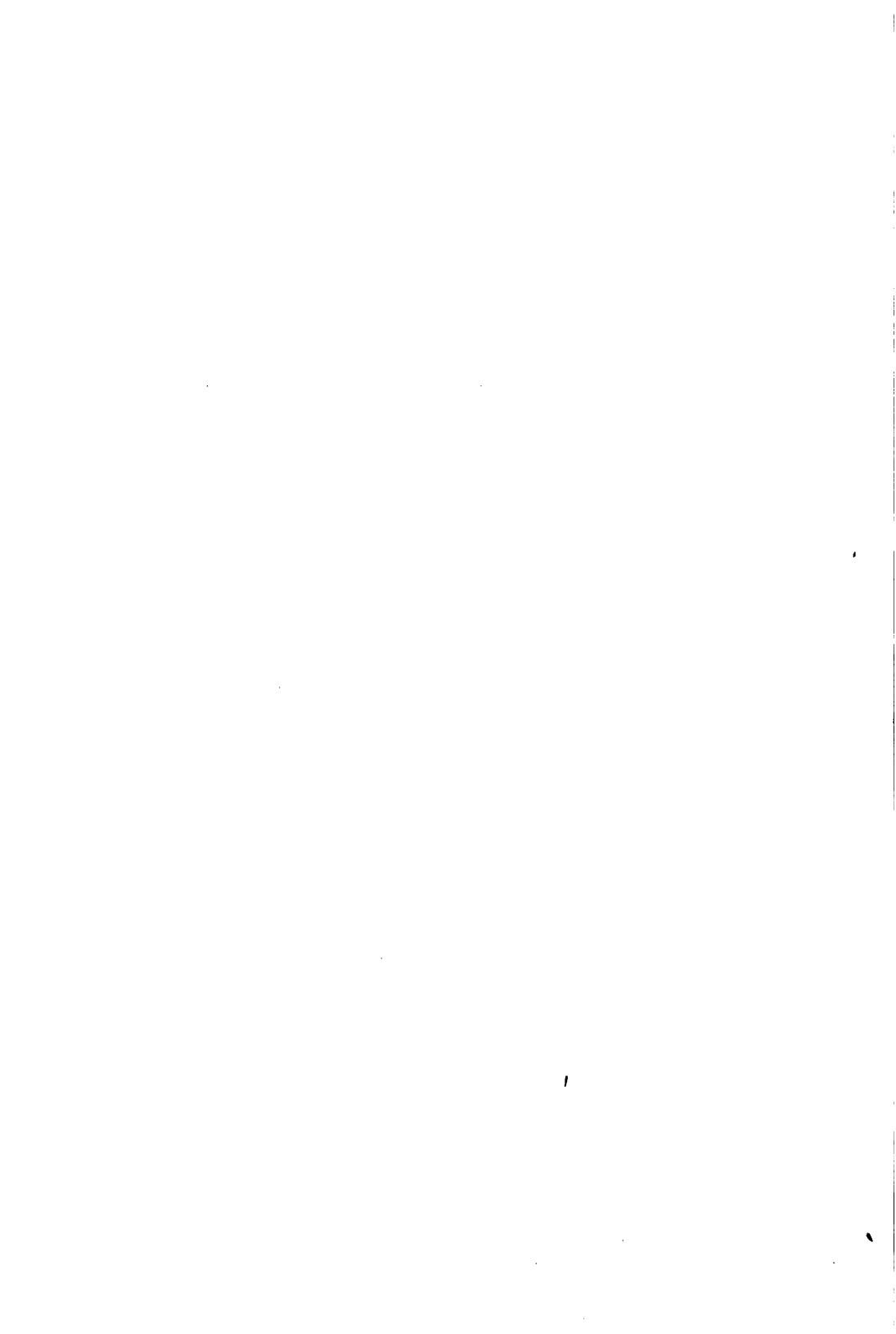
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# **REACTIONS**







# REACTIONS

AND OTHER ESSAYS  
DISCUSSING THOSE STATES  
OF FEELING AND ATTITUDES OF MIND  
THAT FIND EXPRESSION IN OUR  
INDIVIDUAL QUALITIES  
BY JOHN D. BARRY

DRAMA OF  
CALIFORNIA

JOHN J. NEWBEGIN, PUBLISHER,  
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*Class of 1897*

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**To**  
**THE UNSEEN READERS**

**345971**



## Preface

THESE essays are drawn from articles originally contributed during the past four years to the San Francisco Bulletin. They represent what is to me a most interesting period of my life when, from day to day, I have had the privilege of speaking to an audience representing many kinds of people. I realize, of course, that among the hundreds of thousands of Bulletin readers I can hope to reach only a portion. How large it is I cannot even estimate. But I know that the work has made for me friends I never see. Sometimes I hear of them indirectly. Occasionally they write me letters. The kind things they say are pleasant to hear; but pleasanter far is the consciousness that here and there, out in the mystery writers speak to, there are minds responding to mine, not always in agreement perhaps, but in sympathy. Some of them are not what the world calls educated, and for this reason their listening gives me not less satisfaction but more. It is to them that I should like to send my warmest greeting and my deepest thanks.

When I began to write my daily essay I wondered if some morning I might not discover that subjects had given out. Now I know that they are inexhaustible. The more one writes about the teeming life of humankind the more one finds to write about. There are times when so many subjects present themselves that I feel regret at not being able to keep up with them all. Then, too, many subjects are suggested by readers. Some of them, for one reason or another, I cannot use. Others are among the most serviceable.

*When readers compliment me on having so much to say I feel like smiling. They have just as much to say. Some of them have more. We all live in an ocean of thoughts. Through the air they are continually floating. To catch them one does not need to be a writer. For writing represents only one kind of expression. Besides, the most thoughtful people are often those who take in most and say least. In the silence they may receive messages that seldom or never reach our ears, that they express mainly, perhaps wholly, by their living.*

*Thoughts are common property. Many of those I express in this volume have been given to me by others, both consciously given and unconsciously. If a writer depended on his own thoughts alone he would be in a plight. Perhaps there is no such thing as one's own thoughts. Whatever we think that is worth thinking at all is valuable as it serves. Our best thoughts are likely to be those other people are thinking and have long thought, perhaps for generations. To keep a good thought to oneself, to lock it up in consciousness, is to change its nature.*

*What I express here is finding expression all about us. It is part of the thinking and feeling of the world to-day. For this reason, maybe for this reason alone, some readers have responded to it and found in it the pleasure of verification. Most of us like to read what we already believe, not through vanity alone, but through our desire to reach out to spirits akin to ourselves.*

*In this volume I touch on many subjects that perplex those much wiser than I am and much more capable of offering counsel. My excuse is that I do not claim to solve problems or to possess any special clues to guidance. What I like best to do is*

*to talk things over. If the reader will talk with me and agree or disagree according to his choice I shall be satisfied. For some readers the best a writer can do is to express what they would like to express if they happened to be writers. Some of the most cheering letters I receive come from readers who in words I have used have found echoes of their own thinking.*

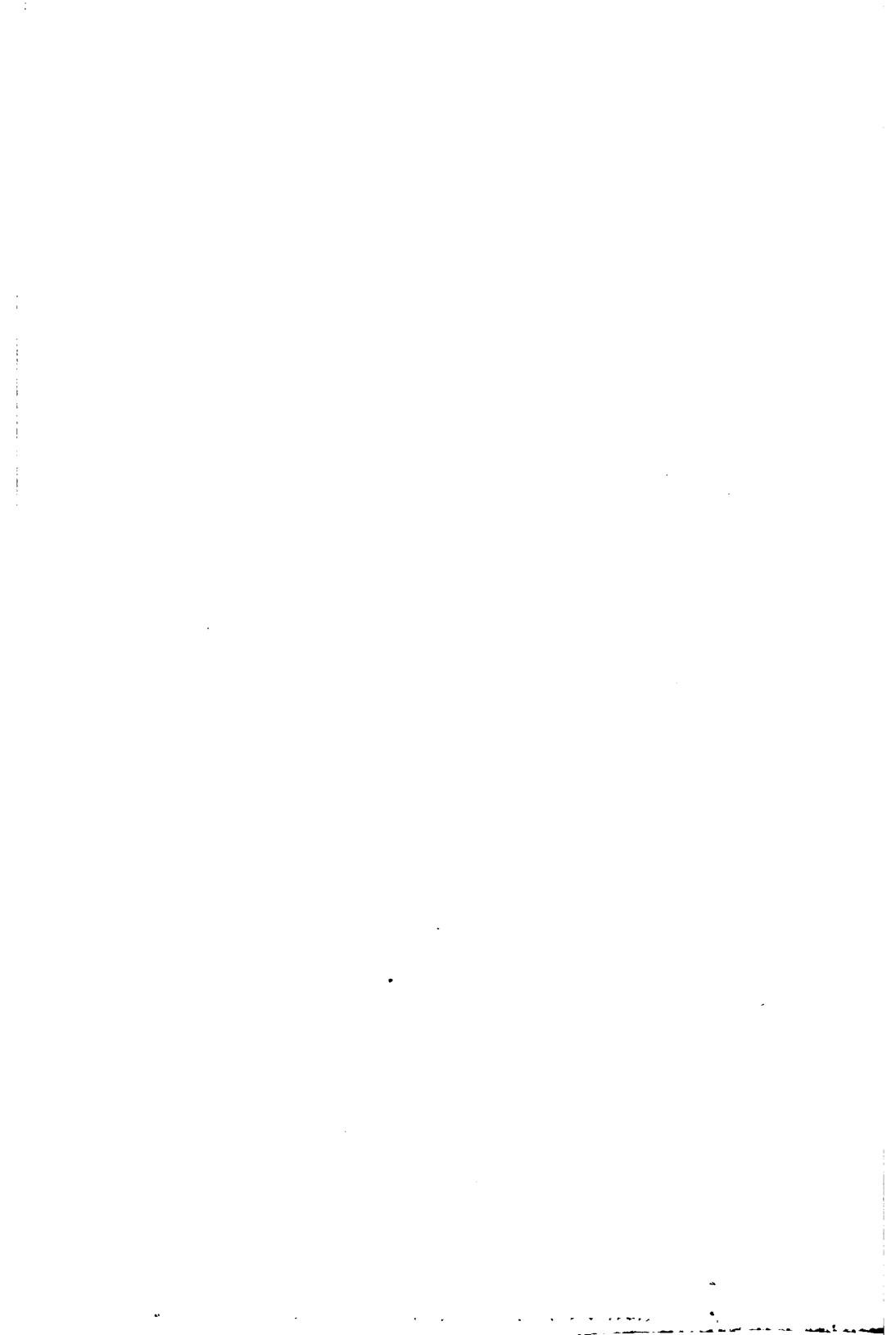
*To a writer, going on from week to week and from year to year, one of the greatest rewards lies in discovering his own inconsistency. The opinions that he expressed so confidently last year he may repudiate now by expressing views curiously different or wholly antagonistic. If such were not the case he might well be concerned about himself and ask what could be the causes that were keeping him from growth.*

*To speak to an audience day after day for a long period is to find out something about oneself. So often we don't know just what we think or feel about this subject or that till we have occasion to marshal our views and to put them into words. Then we discover that beneath the outer crust we call the self there lies another consciousness that, when it cares enough, comes forward and dictates our ideas. All that time, of course, it has been down there, and, silently and seemingly without effort, it has been doing its own feeling and thinking. When it takes possession of us we writers are likely to do our best work. Secretly we may be both surprised and pleased. We may even be a little awed. We have gone beyond ourselves. Perhaps the simple truth is that we have tapped something of the world-consciousness which expresses the deep lying forces we understand so little and are destined to prize more and more.*



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# REACTIONS



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## REACTIONS

**O**BSERVE people at a party. There is a vast difference in their enjoyment. Some are having a good time. Others are bored. Still others are neither bored nor pleased.

And yet the conditions are the same, the opportunities for enjoyment.

One might fancy that the younger people would have the best time, those who take a more or less romantic interest in one another. The pretty girls, eagerly sought for, might be supposed to have the greatest enjoyment of all. And yet these very girls often seem uninterested, listless. On the other hand, the plainer looking girls may be enjoying themselves hugely.

At the theater one notices a similar situation. Study the faces of the people in the orchestra and then study the faces leaning over from the first row of the gallery.

Which of the faces express the greater pleasure?

Nearly always those that look down from the gallery.

And yet the seats are not nearly so comfortable as those in the orchestra and the air up there must be very bad.

Meanwhile, there are other people in the theater that ought to be closely observed, the most highly favored of all, sitting in the boxes. Are they having the best time? As a rule they show no enthusiasm at all. Often, instead of paying attention to the

## REACTIONS

actors on the stage, they talk to one another, not always in low tones.

Think of any two children in the same family that you happen to know. In their veins runs the same blood. They are surrounded by the same influences. But are they alike? Invariably you will find differences between them, sometimes so astonishing as to make it seem impossible that they should be in any way related. One is likely to be happier than the other. What is the reason? It surely can't come from the outside.

Find in your acquaintance the most spoiled person you know, either girl or boy, woman or man. Is this spoiled person likely to be happy? If we were all to answer the question the answer would be the same.

The most wretched woman I have ever known is a great beauty. As a child she was beautiful. Naturally she was made aware of the fact. The world did its best to make her self-conscious. As she grew older she began to realize the power of her beauty. She used it to make exactions. And the more exactions she made the more she expected. Of course, she was disappointed. But she found the habit of exacting so firmly established that it became a part of her. Now, in middle life, she has nothing but her beauty, which, in a few years, she is doomed to lose. It has won for her some of the prizes that people consider great, a rich husband, a distinguished position. But even these prizes could not meet her exactions. Long ago her husband wearied of her, and though the two still live

## REACTIONS

together they are known to be unhappy. And as for position, the woman cares for it only as it gratifies her purely selfish desires. Just now her unhappiness is beginning to show in her face, marring her beauty.

We hear people envying others for this possession or that and making the assumption that because of it there must be happiness. And we go on, most of us, taking this attitude, although we know that the very reverse may be true: instead of being a blessing, possession may be a direct cause of unhappiness. Because we gain what the world believes to be a good thing or what may in itself be a good thing, it does not follow that it will be a good thing to the possessors.

Occasionally we hear people rejoicing over some misfortune in their lives. They make remarks like, "That was the best thing that ever happened to me." What do they mean? As a rule they mean that the misfortune led them to good fortune or taught them wisdom. Only the other day I heard a woman say of a well-known writer, a man she had known for years: "The trouble with him is that he has never had a tragedy in his life." I wondered what she meant. When I asked her she said: "He has always been successful. So he regards success as an easy and a natural thing. He has no sympathy for those who are unsuccessful and have to struggle and suffer. A tragedy would give him a new understanding and a deeper and wider sympathy."

And yet we all know people who have suffered and who are limited in sympathy. The suffering,

## REACTIONS

instead of doing them good, has done them harm. It has made them hard or selfish or even cruel.

There are those who, through suffering, develop a longing to inflict suffering on others.

The truth is, it seems to me, that what happens to one in life is of little importance. What is important is the way we react. If we react wisely from any experience we shall gain. If we react unwisely we shall lose.

"Nothing is lost in nature. All things live in death's despite." Similarly, nothing is lost in experience, provided we take it right.

"I count life just a stuff to try the soul's strength on," says Robert Browning.

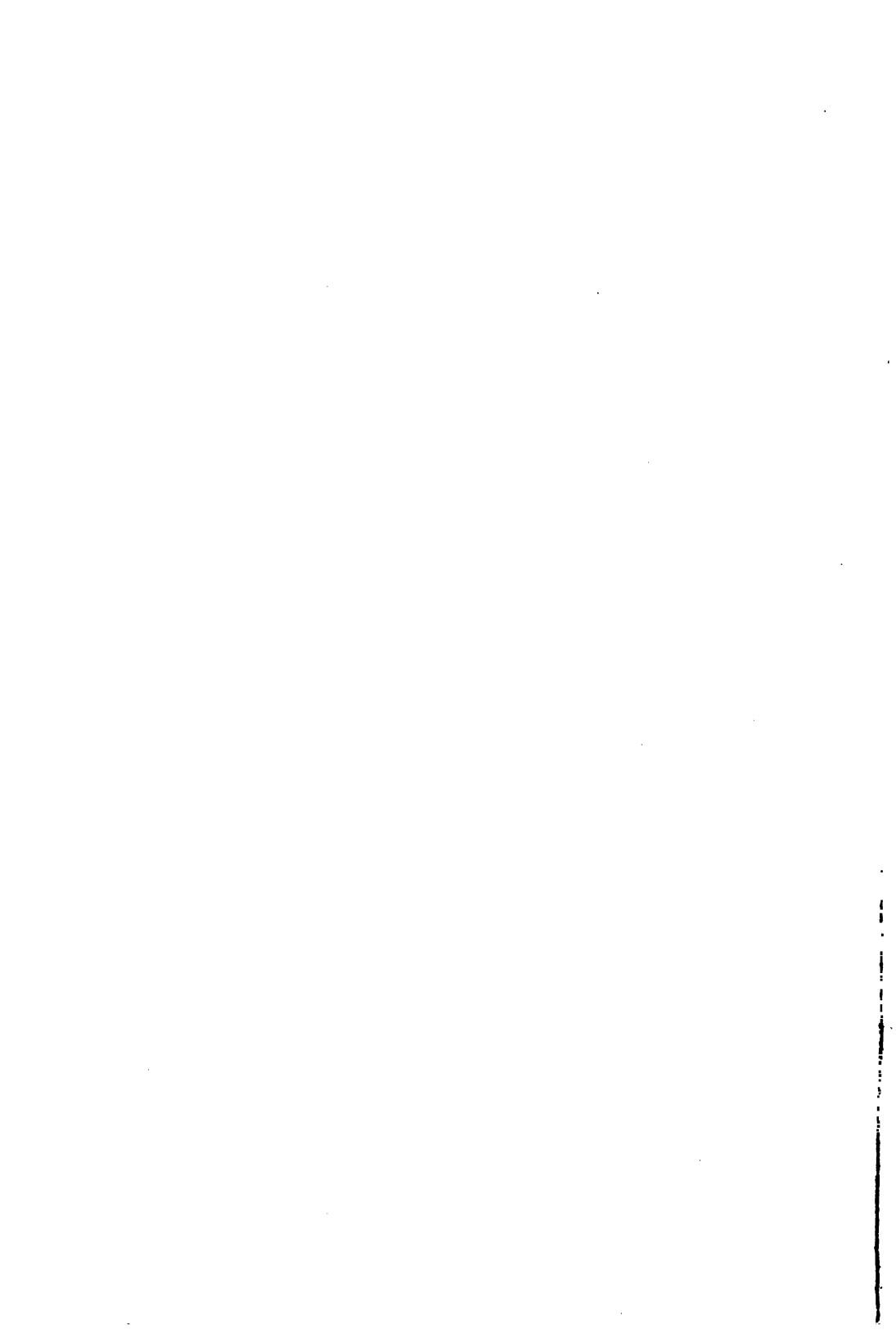
The greatest tests may come, not from ill-fortune, but from good fortune!

## ASPECTS OF WAR

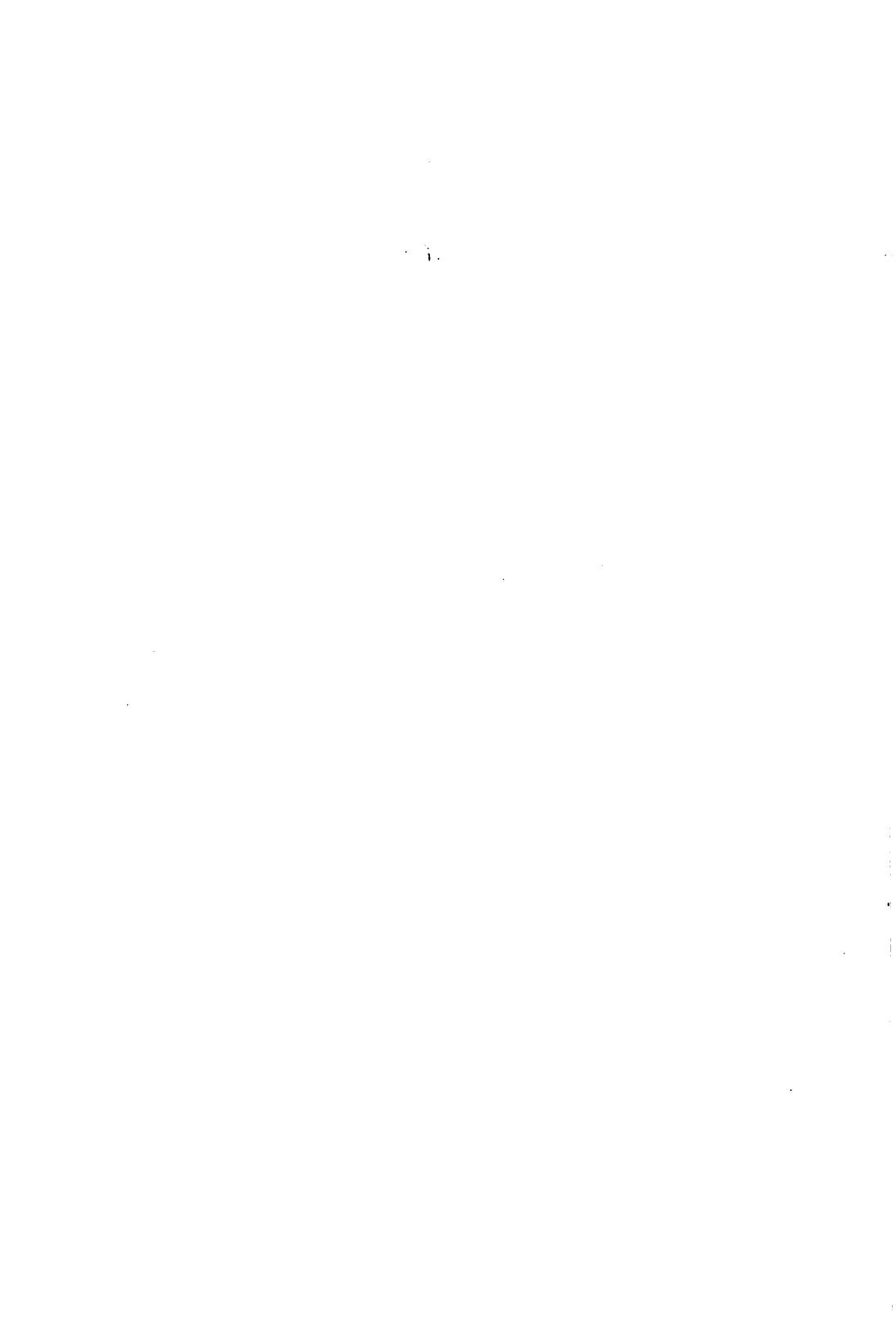
THOUGH it is just now the fashion to deplore war, it is plain that war retains much of its old popular favor. First, it adds to the interest of living. Even at a time when sensations are breaking on all sides, it puts into the news a transcendent feature. It opens up thrilling possibilities in the way of change. There may be splendid episodes, new world-figures, even a new nation of first-rate importance. The standards of men are still closely related to the standards of children. We are stirred by what we feel to be the quick making of history, forgetting that history is always in the making and that the least dramatic adventures may be the most significant. We love the theater far more than the real drama.

In the excitement of war many excellent people find virtue. They express fear for those nations that sink into the monotony of peace, which, they think, carries the seeds of degeneracy. So, from their point of view, a nation at war may be said to be, if not actually in health, on the way to health. Just how they arrive at such a conclusion is not altogether plain. But in itself it seems so brave and impressive that it is often allowed to pass without dispute.

As a matter of fact, when a nation is at war only a part of the people are actively concerned. Among these many can hardly be said to be improved for the simple reason that by the time the war is over



# **REACTIONS**





## ASPECTS OF WAR

joke, with labor as the butt. It might just as well fling to the winds the labor of millions of men, extending over a long period, and laugh aloud at the sport.

Labor, unhappily, doesn't understand as yet. If it did, it could easily put a stop to this iniquity. For the most ghastly feature of this joke is that the wanton destruction of the products of labor is done by laborers themselves, under the guidance of masters. After serving one group of masters to add to the labor products of the world, they serve another group of masters to destroy the labor products of the world. How can the Great Master feel in looking on at such defiance of all the teaching accepted as divine?

The behavior of laborers in war is, indeed, one of the wonders of living. They will not only destroy their own products, but they will fight against and destroy one another, the members of their own kind, their brothers in blood and in disinheritance. And they will do this monstrous thing to the applause of the masters. There will be great soldiers' monuments raised in honor of the dead among them, those who, in trying to kill their brothers, were killed by their brothers, glorious reminders of fratricide.

But suppose those laborers were to get together as one laborer, and suppose they were to refuse to destroy the products of labor and were to assert the claims of labor, their inalienable right? What would the masters say then? It is safe to say that the masters would be scandalized and would say that the laborers were behaving like law-breakers and ought to be punished. They have said exactly such things and they have felt in this way when a

### ASPECTS OF WAR

comparatively few laborers have gone on a strike. And yet they will organize a strike disturbing the whole world and, because they give it the name of war, they will expect the laborers to keep it going and to risk giving up their lives for it.

War, after all, is essentially a strike. But it is more impudent and more ruthless and more destructive and far-reaching than any strike has ever dared to be. The war of 1914 is so appalling that if it represented the revolt of labor the members of the master-class, the small minority, would feel that the end of the world was at hand. And yet, representing minority control, by a ridiculous paradox, it justifies itself and uses laborers as players in the game, pawns on the firing line, strikers not in name but in fact, facing deadly foes without and being foes of their own and controlled by foes. Most of all are they to be pitied, the laborers in this war. They know not what they do. But some time they will know, either they or others just like them. And when that time comes there will be no need of peace conferences to keep the nations from fighting.

The sensitiveness of our far-reaching and economic system was never more dramatically shown than by the effect of this world-war. The civilized world revealed itself as a great living organism. Wounded in one part meant suffering throughout and the greater the wounding the greater the suffering. Will the world profit by so magnificent and so ghastly an object-lesson?

For years we have been hearing that the more terrible war became the closer it approached the

## ASPECTS OF WAR

end. Its very horrors would finally cause it to exterminate itself. That argument was just about as valid as the assertion that great armaments made for peace. As a matter of fact, war has always been too terrible to be endured by any nations that pretended to be civilized. Long ago rules began to be established for the purpose of making it a possible game. If the combatants followed the logic of war to its ultimate they would stop at no atrocity. For many generations it has been understood that even in war one could cease to be a gentleman.

The world-war startlingly emphasized the changed position of women. Not long ago it was taken for granted that women should accept war and have nothing to do with it, save as they could be of service in succoring the wounded and the sick and in helping out in such small ways as they could. Of all the silences of history there is none so pathetic as the silence of women in their attitude toward war. Back through the generations there is hardly a protest. Such clamoring as the women have made has expressed their grief over the wounds in their own hearts reflected from the wounds on the bodies of those near to them and dear. War, as a masculine institution, they were taught to revere. It was even made a reproach to them that they could not go out and fight themselves, inferior creatures that they were, incapacitated for this high service by their weakness. The best they could do was to bear male children and to send them with noble courage to the field of battle. On this theme the utterances of the First Napoleon were of an impudence fairly colossal. He regarded marriage as an institution mainly designed for the legitimate bringing of chil-

#### ASPECTS OF WAR

dren into the world to fight his battles. The marvel is that the women of France did not get together as one woman and tear him limb from limb.

Now some women have learned better. They are teaching the others. The movement has only just begun. It never will be stopped. The time is surely near at hand when women will clamor for their right to have something to say as to whether there shall or shall not be a war. And their clamoring is likely to be far more effective than the weak protesting that is now going on among men all over the world. "When God wipes the slate clean," said Bossuet, "He is beginning to write." He is writing now in letters so large that any one can read. He is telling mankind that the only plagues are not those that result from physical disease, expressions of filth and squalor. There are other plagues that result from causes even deeper, reaching back into the soul of the world, from the wanton disregard of those simple human principles which are the only security of social relations, which we accept in theory but not in fact, which we deny, boldly and flagrantly, by our long-established habits and customs. Hitherto, women have stood apart and felt that all these violations must be right because men think so and say so. With tear-stained eyes they have sent their sons to kill the sons of other women. It seemed to them the only thing to do. Will they go on doing it after they have learned better?

There are those that say women will. Perhaps they are right. Masculine domination has persisted so long, with its glorifying of physical force, that

#### ASPECTS OF WAR

it may take centuries more for women to work their way out. There are even men today who maintain that the influence of women in the body politic, as it increases, will be more and more reactionary in its effect. But all the signs of the past few years point in exactly the opposite direction. Women are the great conservators of human life. Blinded as they have been by the masculine emphasis placed on the value of property, they nevertheless feel instinctively that in a choice between property and humanity there can be no hesitancy. They are well aware that the most valuable asset to the State consists of the children they give to the world. Some one has estimated the value of a human life at six thousand dollars. But women know that it cannot be estimated in terms of money and that no money can compensate for its wanton destruction.

How war brings out the absurdity of the prevailing masculine attitude toward women, in many of its expressions seemingly so deferential and yet, in reality, so contemptuous! This contradiction women like the militant suffragettes are keenly alive to. It explains their ferocity. Many women cannot see it for the simple reason that they are blinded by convention. Falsely trained through the generations, it is perhaps natural that they should falsely react by accepting outrages as a part of their portion in life. Besides, so long have they stayed in what they have been taught to regard as their place that they are afraid to stir. Perhaps the best thing the militant suffragettes can do for women is to start them thinking of their limitations, to make them

## ASPECTS OF WAR

aware of the real attitude taken toward them by men. And never before has this attitude been made plainer than in the present war.

When an individual goes wrong it seems as if a thousand protests rose out of outraged right. There is exactly the same result when a nation goes wrong. A war offers a mighty illustration. Now the open way, the way of honor, is closed. From now on there must be the practice of infamy after infamy, related to concealment, lying, intrigue, seeking for advantage no matter how ignoble, the physical brutalities often outdone by the purely mental and spiritual baseness. Nations at war, no matter how righteous the war may be in fact, or in theory, or in imagination, are nations abandoned to shameless and wanton debauch. The nations engaged in the present war call themselves Christian. But Christian they are not, however much they may pray and profess in the name of Jesus Christ. If they were Christian nations they couldn't be at war.

Though physically and commercially the nations are growing closer, they are still far apart. More hopeful than this kind of growth, however, is the growth only just begun between the workers of the nations. The Syndicalist movement is so young one cannot be sure that it will fulfill its promises. But already it has made millions alive to the difference between the artificial and the real distinctions among men. "Breathes there the man with soul so dead—?" may yet be echoed in a nobler poem, inspiring men to a deeper consciousness of human and economic relations. And the deeper consciousness may arouse the workers of the world

#### ASPECTS OF WAR

to the importance of destroying one of the greatest of the artificial barriers, the barrier made by differences in language. The confusion of tongues has helped to maintain the power of the war lords, just as everything has helped that tends to keep brothers from knowing one another across the spaces of the world.

## THIRTY-NINE YEARS

THE other day an old colored man, healthy and vigorous, came out of a prison.

He had been there for thirty-nine years, convicted of murder. His death sentence had been commuted to a life sentence and ended in pardon.

Here, perhaps, there was an approximation of the divine mercy.

At any rate, we like to hope that, in the other world, all life sentences end in pardon.

This particular murderer seems to have been a good fellow. He must have been something of a philosopher.

He has explained that his thirty-nine years of confinement don't seem so long now that he can look back on them.

The reason is that, on receiving his life sentence, he accepted his fate. He did not try to resist. He made up his mind that prison was to be his earthly abode. So to prison he adjusted himself.

In the realm of the certain he found a kind of peace, as most of us do.

And yet, in our society, how few of us are permitted to dwell in the certain. For most of us life is kept uncertain.

This philosopher says that, through accepting his situation, he fell into "the blues" far less often than "the other boys" did.

His use of words is interesting.

To some of us there is always something strange

## THIRTY-NINE YEARS

in the way convicts speak of one another. It is as if they were ordinary human beings, exactly like the rest of us.

The boys, it seems, used to get the blues from longing for the time when they should be free. Their longing made the days in prison all the heavier.

But the life-sentence man knew that he must live for the day only.

"You see," he said, "up to a short time ago there was no end to look forward to. There was just to-day. Tomorrow I didn't think of."

I wonder if his case doesn't throw some light on the meaning of Christ's saying, "Take no thought for the morrow."

If we live as well as we can for today, don't we meet all the problems of living with full courage and concentration?

It is worth while noting what happened to the prisoner when he began to realize that his life sentence might not prove to be a life sentence.

"When I learned," he said, "that there was a chance for me to get out the time began to drag, and I began to have the blues. I didn't sleep any on the last night, and not very much the night before. My, how long the days were!"

Philosophers have written volumes about the delights of anticipation. But in even so joyous an anticipation as this prisoner had there could be pain. In his imagination, the walls of the prison broke down. Then they even grew stronger, more confining, more cruel.

The world outside had been to the prisoner a kind of Paradise, forever lost. As a reality he had put it away from him forever.

## THIRTY-NINE YEARS

As soon as the world assumed reality to him again, within possible reach, it became both a joy and a torment.

When a man has been in prison for thirty-nine years he becomes an object of interest. He stands out from the rest of humanity. So he is likely to find fellow-creatures interested in him.

On emerging from prison there were a good many people ready to help this colored man.

They must have enjoyed his joy in the free world, his amazement at seeing the things that for years he had heard about and read about, the trolley cars, the telephone, the subway, the elevated trains, the marvels revealed to man during the thirty-nine years.

And yet, in retrospect, those years didn't really seem so long!

Think of the multitude of the imprisoned, not for thirty-nine years only, but for life, without being confined within stone walls. We are so used to seeing them all about us that to our eyes they don't seem strange. It is society that has imprisoned them, not in body, but in mind and soul.

In thinking over that colored man's prison life, one wonders at the mystery of time.

In that prison there were doubtless men, confined for a few months or a few weeks only, whose confinement really stretched over a period far exceeding thirty-nine years.

After all, time is only a relative thing. Some philosophers maintain that it is merely a creation of the mind.

How quickly a few moments of pleasure may pass. And yet the same number of moments of pain may seem like eternity.

## THIRTY-NINE YEARS

We deal with time as if it were concrete, possible of measurement. We make it a definite factor in punishment.

Here is only one of the many mysteries that we so confidently deal with when we punish our fellow creatures.

Perhaps some day we shall understand better.

Perhaps we shall even know how to make the most of all the good that is now so plain in the character of the colored murderer. Then we may find some better way of developing that good and placing it at the service of society than keeping the man in prison for thirty-nine years.

The treatment of this prisoner suggests that society is far wiser and far more economical in dealing with its animals than in dealing with its men.

Have you ever studied the working of a packing-house? It offers a marvelous exhibition of economy and thrift.

Nothing in the cattle is allowed to go to waste.

The marvelous system Upton Sinclair has vividly described in "The Jungle."

Society might learn something about economy in treating men by studying the methods of the packing-house.

It might encourage science to work on the problem of making the most of men, as it has encouraged science to discover how to make the most of cattle.

Then society may find better use for a man guilty of crime than shutting him up thirty-nine years, crippling his family by taking his services, and inflicting on him and his relatives lifelong disgrace.

## THE STUMBLERS

EVERY now and then some highly respectable person, as we say, "goes wrong," or is detected in a serious misdemeanor. Then some of the other highly respectable people are shocked. They cannot understand. One of their own kind! It is impossible! What is going to become of the world? Is no one to be trusted?

The answer to these questions is plain enough. No one is to be trusted. And yet the world will go on and it will go on much as it has gone on before, the chances being that, by the law of evolution, it will grow not worse, but better. And those very people who provide the shocks, they will go on, too, and maybe they will improve, if the still highly respectable do not make the task too difficult.

The situation really is not bad at all. It is not even bad that no one is to be trusted. For, besides this aspect of the truth, there is another aspect: Every one is to be trusted. It all depends. We are all weak and we are all strong. In us strength and weakness are always contending. The people called bad have their good moments. The people called good have their moments when, if they are not actually bad, they are capable of being bad, when, if just the right temptation comes under just the right conditions, they are likely to yield.

Where we go astray is in assuming that a human being is definitely one kind or another kind. He is

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all kinds. We have in us, every one of us, mighty potentialities. Under the influence of certain forces we can act as if we were angels out of heaven. Under the influence of other forces we can act as if we were devils out of hell.

But, as we are all secretly aware, the matter goes deeper. Actions lie on the surface. They reflect only part of us. In the depths of consciousness lies reality and few of us care to reveal what, at moments or for long intervals, goes on there. It is there that we ally ourselves with the sinners of the world. Imprisoned there are the wrongs and the shames, the bitternesses and the hates, the revenges and the gratuitous iniquities, all the horrors that mirror to us our weakness and that warn us to beware. For most of us training, circumstance, fear, understanding, perhaps mere canniness, as well, keep us in control. But how can we be sure that the instant may not come when our defenses will break down and we shall find ourselves among the condemned?

Then consider the things we actually do, the things that are wrong. Suppose it does happen that our offenses don't come within the range of the law. Are they necessarily any the less offenses? Look into the lives of the most sincere and ardent reformers. You will find wrong-doing here, too, often of what an unbiased judgment might call extreme gravity. Some of that wrong-doing masquerades as right-doing and is publicly exploited as admirable, something to be imitated. For example, men go about denouncing other men as monsters, though those other men are not and cannot be monsters, being like the denouncers, mixtures of good and bad. They

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spread misrepresentation and exaggeration. To establish their points they will sometimes resort to deliberate lies. And those lies they will justify to themselves on the ground that if those particular things are not true, other things as bad or worse are true. They arouse enmity and hate and fear and the desire for vengeance. Incidentally, by their daily exactions on those around them, by their moral severity, by their austere detachment, their lack of sympathy, they may go on offending and causing misery every day of their lives.

The so-called bad people understand perfectly well. For this reason when one of the highly respectable gets into trouble they are tempted to rejoice and to mock. They can hardly be blamed. Too often have they felt the lash of virtue wielded by the hands of the respectables and too often have they been made to feel that their weakness, instead of being only one aspect of them, was all they had, and was the cause of their being driven into the byways of life, where indignities awaited them and despair.

When the good go wrong, or those supposed to be good, there ought to be neither wailing nor rejoicing. What is good in them persists. It may become even a finer kind of good, through humility and through the realization of its worth. Now it is the business of the rest of the world not to do anything that will harm that good, not to take advantage in the name of righteousness. There is an even finer opportunity in the situation; it asks us to remember our own relation to it and to all the offenders in the world, the least and the greatest. They are all close to us. In a very literal sense they are ourselves. The forces that made them out of

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common human material might have made us to be exactly like them. And the forces that developed the qualities we pride ourselves on possessing and displaying might have saved them and might save them still.

Here is the real comfort of the situation. No one is hopeless but the utterly depraved and the utterly irresponsible. The utterly depraved don't exist. They are myths, created by the imagination of the highly respectable. The irresponsible are obviously insane and should be cared for as such. Holding up our hands in horror is hypocrisy and waste. But there is saving and there is reason and there is usefulness in helping people who stumble and in helping them all the more enthusiastically because we know that we ourselves are given to stumbling, and that we ourselves ought to be grateful if we haven't as yet had a serious fall.

## KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

THE other day I happened to sit in a street car beside a distinguished man. He was looking over the comic section of a newspaper. Presently he began to smile. Then he smiled broadly. Then he laughed outright. Then he went on laughing, unconscious that the people about him were looking on and laughing, too.

Suddenly he looked up and he saw that everyone in the car was sharing his mirth. His face turned red.

In a moment, however, he recovered himself and resumed his smiling.

"I suppose I am a fool to enjoy these things," he said to a man who was with him.

You see, he apologized for his enjoyment. As if enjoyment were a thing to be apologized for.

I didn't think that man was a fool. I don't believe he really thought so either. He was for the moment just a little ashamed at being caught enjoying a simple and perfectly harmless pleasure. Moreover, he was giving expression to one of the most precious of all human gifts, appreciation of the comic. In his complete abandonment to mirth it made him forget all about himself.

The incident made the man seem to me very likable. I believe that if his relish of comic pictures were known to the public it would increase his already wide popularity.

## KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

There is something peculiarly likable in the enjoyment of the comic. And yet so many of us lack this gift, perhaps a large number of those of us who think we have a sense of humor.

I have noticed that many highly cultivated people, blessed with humor of their own and with the capacity of seeing humor all about them, have no sense whatever of the comic. They occasionally look over the comic section of the newspaper with a mild and puzzled interest. Often they express wonder that others can enjoy such pictures. And in this wonder it is easy to detect a quality not unlike self-satisfaction.

So often we pride ourselves on our incapacities.

I know a lawyer, who at college was pitcher on the 'varsity baseball team. Naturally, his success as an athlete made him a leader. He now looks back on those days with some amusement. But they have contributed to his life one delightful interest, a passion for baseball. Whenever he finds a chance he steals away from his office and goes to a ball game. There he completely forgets work and he forgets himself. He even forgets his dignity. He may be seen at times waving his hat in the air and shouting like a schoolboy.

Those periods of absolute forgetfulness give him some of the most delightful and the most wholesome hours of his life. They relieve him of the strain of his work. They renew his youth. They send him back to duty a stronger and, I believe, a better man.

There is a man of national reputation, a reformer of great ability and breadth of mind, who has one

### KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

habit that amuses his friends. He loves sensational novels. One after another he reads them with avidity. At night when he goes to bed he is usually too excited to fall asleep. So he has formed the habit of reading for a couple of hours. I think that he must be one of the greatest living authorities on detective stories. "Old Sleuth" he regards as a friend, a solace in trouble.

In speaking of this fondness once in my presence he apologized to me, as a literary man, for what he called his "bad taste" and "weakness." It seemed to me, however, that in the habit there was neither weakness nor bad taste. On the contrary, I envied him. He enjoyed giving free rein to his imagination. He completely lost himself. During those periods of absorption he undoubtedly rested that part of his mind which had been assiduously working all day. Moreover, his fondness for sensational literature did not keep him from enjoying the kind of imaginative writing that the rest of us considered good. He simply had a broader taste than most of us, especially those of us that wrote ourselves and built up all kinds of prejudices in favor of the kind of writing we called the best writing.

Fortunate are those men who can lose themselves in any wholesome diversion. And particularly fortunate are they if, during their working hours, they put heavy demands on their physical and nervous vitality.

It is a pity that in our life we have not given more encouragement to the developing of such diversions. We have been so foolish as to let it seem rather creditable for a man to put aside the

## KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

diversions of his youth. So many men that I know would be ashamed to take part in the interests and in the games and sports that they used to enjoy in youth. And yet these diversions they may need far more than they did when they were younger.

The most bored man I have ever known has enough money to live comfortably and to enjoy life. But he seems to be in a continual state of discomfort. At the age of fifty or thereabouts he declares that life doesn't interest him. "Oh, I've done everything so many times," I once heard him say with a yawn.

You see, he has always lived for his own gratification. And he has grown tired even of himself.

I know another man, a friend of his, of the same age, who has been endowed with about the same amount of this world's goods. But, of the two, he seems by far the younger. He enjoys life hugely. He says that as he grows older he has a better time. The other day I saw him coming out of a theatre. Beside him were two children, his niece and nephew. They had all been seeing a comic opera.

"Well, if you could have seen those kids during the performance," he said, his face shining with amusement. And he proceeded to give me an account of the pleasure he had had in watching them and in hearing their comments. "It was like seeing two shows," he said. Then he walked gaily down the street, the children clasping his hands and jumping up and down and talking.

Since that time I have seen him at ball games, at motion-picture shows and walking in the park, always accompanied by some youngster, occasion-

## KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

ally by more than one and always having a good time.

For most people there is unquestionably a period in life when pleasures pall. Often they wonder what the matter is. Sometimes they blame the world, or nature, or God. They never blame themselves.

And yet around them are people as old as they are themselves or older, who are still enjoying pleasures.

Sometimes they wonder why those people are so fortunate. Sometimes they don't even wonder.

Nearly always they dread growing old. For in advancing years they see only the threat of decreasing enjoyment of life.

They forget that nature has provided a means of the renewal of enjoyment, which may amount to a doubling of enjoyment.

With the loss of the capacity to enjoy there is likely to be the loss of sympathy. Here we find an explanation of the increasing crabbedness of many people as they grow older. They become more and more shut in on themselves. And yet it is themselves that they most long to escape from.

There is only one way of escaping from ourselves. That is by entering into the minds and the feelings of others and interests outside ourselves.

The time comes to all of us when, if we are to get anything worth while out of life, we must get it without looking for it merely for ourselves. We must get it by putting it into other lives.

But it is not enough to follow the course for the sake of advantage.

## KEEPING ONE'S PLEASURES

Such a way would invariably lead to disappointment. We must first wish to give pleasure before we may hope to find pleasure in such giving.

In other words, we must learn to feel with others. In this way alone can we share their pleasure.

When Julia Ward Howe was getting close to her ninetieth year, she said to one of her friends that the older she grew the more she enjoyed life. "The sweetest honey lies at the bottom of the cup." The secret was that each year she made her life richer in thought, in affection, and in the capacity to see and to feel with others. Though she was virtually incapacitated, walking only with difficulty, she still lived abundantly and she shared the joys of a multitude of people, those close to her through ties of blood, including a troop of great-grandchildren, and a vast number of others whose friendship she had held for many years, and a still greater number that she had not seen and yet took an interest in. Instead of losing her zest for living, she gained more. Through having so much to give, she had so much the greater capacity to receive.

## EXPECTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

TO-DAY for a long time I watched a man experimenting with a talking machine. He was delighted with his success. He spoke easily and rapidly and heard his words reproduced with clearness. Occasionally he would turn on the reproducer and let me hear the record of what he had been saying.

Suddenly the machine refused to work. It stood there like a balky horse. Something was wrong.

For a long time we tried to find what had happened. But, to our inexpert eyes, the machine looked exactly as it had before.

Yet it wouldn't work!

At last we gave up in despair. We telephoned for a mechanician.

I was so curious to see what the matter was that I waited for the mechanician to come. Presently he appeared. With one glance he took in the situation. He smiled. "Your sapphire has dropped out," he said. We looked closely under the reproducer, and, sure enough, the point had disappeared. The machine had not been able to record for the simple reason that it had nothing to record with.

In a few moments the sapphire was replaced. All was well. We went on with our experimenting.

That little experience taught me something, the folly of expecting the impossible, of thinking that both things and people can work right when conditions are wrong.

## EXPECTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

In our daily lives we are constantly expecting the impossible. And we are constantly complaining because the impossible does not happen.

For example, we expect certain people to see things as we see them. Those people can't possibly see things as we see them. The machinery of their minds prevents.

It may be that something is the matter with the machinery of their minds. On the other hand, it may be that there is something the matter with the machinery of our own minds.

In our life we are surrounded by the inevitable. Everywhere we turn we meet it. And yet it is the inevitable that we are constantly resisting.

There is a significant phrase that the psychologists sometimes use. They say of this person or that that he is "fulfilling the law of his nature." We do everything because, all our lives, according to our nature, we have been preparing to do this thing in just the way we do it.

Here is what many people consider a hopeless philosophy. They deny its truth because they say it is depressing. As if truth, rightly viewed, could ever be depressing. And as if there could be anything so depressing as a denial of truth, as a fear of the consequences of truth.

Those who fear the doctrine of the inevitable forget the inevitable can be prepared for. The whole truth about the inevitable teaches that nature can be repaired exactly like machinery and that, like machinery, virtue can be developed.

We are only at the beginning of our discoveries in regard to the possibilities of both machinery and human nature.

## EXPECTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

When that talking machine refused to work it was following a law. And when men refuse to work or when they are unable to work effectively they are fulfilling a law. To repair the trouble, all we have to do is to find out what is to be done and then to do it.

What is to be done with the nature of those people who cannot work effectively? Simply educate them.

What is to be done with those who refuse to work?

Find out what the matter is, the cause of their refusal. Treat that.

Many of the things that we now attribute to the inevitable we find are inevitable only under certain circumstances.

So many evils, resulting from human nature, we once thought hopeless. But now we have discovered that there is a very simple way of dealing with them, treating them so that they shall take pleasure in fulfilling, not the lower, but the higher law.

I noticed that while that talking machine was working it actually seemed to be happy. It moved along with a hum of content. When it stopped its whole nature seemed to change. It became unattractive, almost unsightly. It inspired us with a resentful feeling.

When once it had started again it became alive again. It was fulfilling its nature. It was a pleasure to look on.

The trouble with most of us is that we are only partly alive. We are not fulfilling the law of our nature, under its artificial and easily removable limitations.

## EXPECTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

But let us have a little more education and we shall be surprised to see how the law of our nature will seem to change.

Gradually we are discovering that there is a vast amount of waste in the world. And of all the waste there is none like that of human possibilities, lying far out of sight, waiting to be called into life and service for need of proper training.

But here, as in everything else, we must be careful not to expect the impossible. Let us do everything we can to make the impossible possible.

The matter really reduces itself to making allowances. We all know how to make allowances—for ourselves. We make them every day. So it is curious that most of us find it so hard to make them for other people. And yet when we do make them for other people we make them for ourselves, too. To realize this simple and obvious fact and actually to live by it, is to master one of the most practical lessons of experience.

Observe the man who does not make allowances. For him each day consists of a series of struggles. In the morning he complains because the breakfast isn't right, and he makes everyone at the table uncomfortable. When he reaches his office, he finds a dozen things to exasperate him and he storms till it is time for him to go to luncheon. Then he is so worn out that he is in no condition to enjoy his food. He complains that he has no appetite, and because he feels no interest in eating, the things offered to him seem not fit to eat. On his return to the office he has had no real refreshment and he feels worse than he felt at the beginning of the day.

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More things come up to exasperate him and by five or six o'clock he is "fit to be tied." By the time he reaches home no wonder he feels as if he were on the verge of a collapse. At dinner he is so irritable that the children eat in silence, casting covert glances at one another. And during the evening they hardly dare to play for fear of "disturbing father."

On the other hand, observe the man who makes allowances. He knows that he himself often blunders. So he is patient when others do likewise. When annoying things happen at home, he keeps his temper. In the morning he goes down to breakfast with a smiling face. During the meal he finds things to discuss pleasantly, perhaps to make jokes about. In the office, there are vexations, but he realizes that they are incidental to all business and he tries to meet them with patience. There are also many interesting and agreeable episodes, and delightful contacts with friends and pleasant meetings with new acquaintances. And at noon, there is a break in the day, with good talk over the luncheon, the food being only incidental, as it should always seem to be. In the afternoon comes the winding up of the day's tasks, which ought to be cheerful with its promise of release from care. Then home for a good-humored family dinner and a restful evening before the sleep of the night. Here and there, of course, there is a jar, perhaps a jolt, but, if philosophically met, it is quickly forgotten.

One can hardly believe that if any man were to choose between these two kinds of a day he would choose the first kind. But many men do choose it

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and, worst of all, they get into the habit of choosing it. So their lives are cursed with the habit of never making allowances for others. And they cannot realize that by their exactions they cripple those around them, through the fear they inspire, the ill-will, the resentment. But most of all they cripple themselves. The habit gives them absurd confidence in themselves, particularly in their own righteousness, and a fund of bitterness toward the rest of the world. And this bitterness acts like poison in the blood, destroying happiness and peace and turning consciousness into torment.

A business man of my acquaintance has what seems to those who know him remarkable skill in finding efficient workers. Not long ago, when he was asked to explain how he came by it, he said: "I think it must be because I try to find out just what each man's qualities are, both good and bad, and then I try to put him at the tasks he is adapted to. But in no case do I expect perfection. On the contrary, I expect and I allow for imperfection. But by encouraging what is well done I succeed fairly well in minimizing what is ill-done."

This attitude of mind is surely much more productive of good results than the attitude that never makes allowances and that is always expecting the impossible.

The fault-finding habit one often notes among women in their relations with servants. It is one of the greatest causes of what is called the servant-problem. A servant recently told me that in a position she held for three years, though she had often been scolded by her mistress, she had not once

### EXPECTING THE IMPOSSIBLE

been commended or thanked. Naturally she had little incentive to endeavor beyond her self-respect as a worker and her desire to keep her position. She felt that she was held up to extremely difficult standards, that perfection was expected of her and by one who was herself by no means perfect.

In the practice of judging and condemning, most of us are strongly inconsistent. The very qualities that we love and foster in ourselves we may be quick to make a scandal and a reproach to others. Indeed, if we could only be as kind to others as we are to ourselves, we should live in a world of tolerance and charity. The marvel is that, with so many warnings and examples about us, we don't learn and practice. Invariably, those who refuse to make allowances for others are the destroyers of their own peace. It is as if they took on the weaknesses and the faults around them. On the other hand, those who do make allowances, who never expect the impossible, find life a daily comedy, abounding in kindly happenings and friendly relations.

The matter reduces itself wholly to expectation. If we expect much of the world, we are almost certain to receive little. If we expect little, we meet abundance. To make allowances is to acquire a clear perception of what is fundamentally good. Not to make allowances is to seek and even to increase weakness. For the more we look for weakness the more we help it to flourish. But when we look for strength and recognize it and rejoice in it, the more we add to those forces that make for successful living and that make the seemingly impossible possible.

## USING TIME

**D**O YOU ever think about the time you waste? I suspect that you do. Most of us do. With some of us it is a serious cause of depression. And yet we go on wasting time.

What is the reason? Doesn't it lie in most cases to lack of regularity, of system?

In system there is a kind of magic.

Observe the way results pile up when you faithfully follow system.

It may not be wonderful. It may be ordinary, even inferior. Yet its regularity will do wonders.

I know a writer who makes it a rule to write one page of manuscript a day. The work seems very little. And yet he accomplishes big results.

He considers himself a lazy man. In many ways he is. But he relies on the magic of system. It seems actually to work for him. He often speaks of it as the greatest of all miracles. His reverence for it makes him faithful to that one page. No matter what may happen to him, no matter how sick he may be, or how discouraged, or how tired, or how distracted with affairs, he writes that page.

I once saw him working in his study while his wife lay dead down stairs.

Some people would think that he was heartless. He was not. He was showing the power of habit.

I once stood with two men in front of a long row of books written by a famous author. One of them ran his finger along the row. It took that finger

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some time to reach the last book. "How in the world can anyone do so much in one lifetime?" he asked in a tone of discouragement.

The other man happened to know something about that author's life. "He had a very easy time," he said. "He never worked more than two or three hours a day. He had system."

"But didn't his brain ever give out?" the man asked resentfully.

"I suppose his brain got into the habit of working. Brains generally do. That's one blessed thing about them. They like good habits. If you don't over-work them and if you let them have system they'll do wonders."

Have you ever read "Anthony Trollope's Autobiography"? It is a remarkable human document, the life of a great man frankly narrated by the man himself.

It happened that Anthony Trollope was a writer. But that circumstance was unimportant. He was pre-eminently a man.

Trollope devoted himself to the business of authorship exactly as he might have devoted himself to any other business. He worked at writing for three hours each day, not a very hard daily stint. But, as it happened, he had another occupation, a position in the English postal service. He made up his mind to do his stint of writing no matter what happened. Often he would write on trains. What writers call "waiting for an inspiration" he considered nonsense. The result of his system was that he accomplished a vast amount of work. But, by telling the truth about his system, he injured his reputation. When his "Autobiography" was

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published after his death, lovers of literature were shocked, instead of being impressed by his courage and industry. They had the old-fashioned notion about writing, which still persists, by the way. They liked to think of writers as "inspired," as doing their work by means of a divine agency.

As if we did not all do our work by a divine agency—no matter what the work may be.

But the divine agency insists on being backed up with character, which means courage and persistence, the qualities that make for system.

In the "Autobiography," Anthony Trollope unquestionably showed that he was not an inspirational writer, and that he was a man inspired by tremendous moral force.

There were those who said that writing so produced, by methods so mechanical, could not be good. They showed that they did not understand mental processes. Those methods of Trollope's were only apparently mechanical. The brain-processes went on just as they did when writers followed moods.

The chances are that Trollope maintained as high an average of work as he would have done if he had waited for "inspiration." Moreover, he accomplished at least ten times as much as he would have done if he had allowed himself to be a slave of "inspiration."

It is waiting until we feel like working that is the curse of most of our lives.

We forget that the more we do the more we are likely to feel like doing.

There is an inspiration far greater and far more reliable than the impulse that comes from waiting. It lies in working.

## PRISONERS OF PREJUDICE

YOU know them as well as I do, the Prisoners of Prejudice. Perhaps you are one. But if you are, you never include yourself among them.

Perhaps I am one. Convince me and you may show me a way of escape.

A man said to me the other day, an ardent worker for social betterment: "Every now and then I try to remind myself that I may be all wrong, and that the people I am tempted to judge may be nearer the truth than I am."

I opened my eyes in astonishment. It was as if I had seen a flash of light.

I also felt uneasy.

Is there any way of escape from the prison of self? There is only one way, the wise men declare. On this way they agree, the wise men of all times. And their conclusion is so simple it seems as if it could not possibly be true. But so many true things are simple, when you've found them out!

And yet, after repeated lessons, we are always looking for complicated meanings in life, for complex solutions. The wise men say the only escape from the prison of self is by the annihilation of self. "Losing alone is finding."

Till we lose ourselves in our consideration for other human beings, we cannot free ourselves from ourselves.

## PRISONERS OF PREJUDICE

"In whose service there is perfect freedom," is a fine saying. We all know that in serving ourselves alone there is not perfect freedom. That is perfect slavery. There is imprisonment with the clasping of the bars.

So, after all, there is a key to the cell. Some people call it Service. Others call it Self-Abnegation. Still others call it Love.

But no matter what the name may be. Prejudice strives to lurk behind it. Often the key is a false key. And the people using it wonder why it doesn't open to them the door to happiness. When you hold the key in your hand and refuse to let yourself out, the situation is sad. But sadder far is the situation when you hold the key to the prison of your brother and refuse to let him out.

See the Judge sitting on the bench. How impressive he is in his fine clothes, his face and head nobly formed, his whole being seeming to radiate intelligence, character, power. He is a light in the community. Where he walks there is no darkness. Society has made him what he is. He is rewarding society. Again and again he has paid back what society has given.

And the poor wretch in the dock. He is stunted and ugly and forlorn. He has committed a crime. His whole being seems to radiate criminality. He looks the thing he is accused of being. People frown and glance away.

And yet society has made the wretch what he is, exactly as society has made the Judge what he is. And not satisfied with making him the wretch he is, society is punishing him for being what he is,

## PRISONERS OF PREJUDICE

exactly as society is rewarding the Judge for being what he is.

Society makes. Then society rewards and punishes her handiwork.

Society might have made the criminal the Judge. Society might have made the Judge the criminal.

In one case there is profit, all profit, and in the other there is loss, all loss.

How can it seem to the eye of divine justice?

Perhaps it would be more pertinent to ask, how should it seem to the eye of the divine justice in man?

Am I my brother's keeper? Is it my duty to keep my brother in his cell? Or shall I throw open the door of the cell so that my brother may roam the fields and feel his body and soul expand under the wide sky and lift his voice to God in thankfulness and praise?

If that prisoner in the dock were physically sick, instead of being morally sick, as he is, how quickly he would be rushed to a hospital! For it is plain that his case is extreme. Even the Judge, reserved as he is and impartial, seems shocked.

Yes, it is plain that disease has eaten into the man's soul. But no one feels pity. No one holds out a hand to help. All those about him, good people all, they long to see him sent among other morally diseased and weak people. He may infect those others. He may make them worse than they are. And they, too, may contribute to his moral decay. Diseased he will returned to the society that infected him, far more diseased than when he left society.

## PRISONERS OF PREJUDICE

What is the cause of such hideous soul sickness?  
Don't you know?

Look at the history of the prisoners throughout the land. In one particular, with exceptions so few they need not be considered, their histories are identical. They are poor.

And we, with our blessings, can we do nothing better for him than we have done? Can we never break from our own cells, the cells of prejudice, and help him? Must we keep him a prisoner for the simple reason that we are content to remain prisoners ourselves?

## THE IMAGINARY PEOPLE

YESTERDAY I met one of those entertaining talkers that pride themselves on their insight.

After intimately discussing several people known to us both, explaining what went on in their inner consciousness, he proceeded to tell me things about myself. I was naturally interested, though not altogether comfortable. Once or twice I was tempted to stop him; but I resisted. To tell the truth, I was curious to see how far he would go. He kept watching my face for assurance that his insight was correct. The more he talked the stronger grew his confidence. He proceeded to tell me things that went on in my mind, very intimate things, some of them flattering.

Not one of those particular things had ever happened to occur to me.

But there was no use in telling him so. He would have known better.

He was simply doing aloud what most of us do in silence, creating an imaginary human being and identifying it with a real human being.

There is a very popular magazine writer who, a few years ago, used to publish studies of public men. His articles showed an amazing knowledge of what went on in the minds of those men, or what might pass for knowledge. I don't believe the men themselves knew half as much as he did about their inner consciousness.

He had fathomed those men. For our instruction he proceeded to turn those men inside out.

## THE IMAGINARY PEOPLE

Often as I read those articles I would say to myself, "Does this fellow think he is God?"

He actually wrote as if no important thought of any one of his subjects had escaped him, that is, no thought of evil.

For in nearly every instance it was the evil in his subject's character that he was most keenly alive to.

So many of us are like that writer. We size up one another as if each of us believed that he was God. And in our judgments we are most keenly alive to what is evil.

In this respect I wonder if there is not a fundamental difference between God and ourselves.

Unquestionably we often see the evil. But often we mistake its origin. Where we think we find it in others it may really come from our own thinking.

The truth is that most of us see what we are looking for in this world.

If we are looking for evil we find it. The reason is not merely that evil exists all around us. There is another reason, far more potent. By looking for evil in our fellow creatures we bring out evil either from them or from ourselves, perhaps from both.

By looking for good we bring out good, both from others and from ourselves.

But there really is not much to be gained by looking. Those of us who look most are usually those who see least. Conscious looking tends to put people on their guard, to create limitation, awkwardness.

There is just one way of seeing aright. I should not be surprised if that were God's way. But I

### THE IMAGINARY PEOPLE

don't pretend to know. I only know that it invariably works with human beings. That is, by feeling with other people.

If we feel sympathy we shan't want to fathom people and to expose all their weaknesses. We shall recognize them as being essentially like ourselves. And we shall give them the same merciful judgment that we are so eager to give to ourselves.

So let us be careful about this practice, so common now, of indulging and displaying our insight. When we think it is revealing others it may be revealing only ourselves.

And worst of all, it may be peopling the world for us with ugly ghosts, creatures of evil that come out of our egotistical thoughts.

## THE DECLINE OF ARROGANCE

OCCASIONALLY I meet a man who bears himself like a noble Roman. He comes of an ancient lineage and he is very proud. Toward the world he takes an attitude of condescension. Of his kind he is a perfect specimen. I enjoy meeting him and hearing him talk. The only drawback is that, in his presence, it is hard not to betray mirth. As a matter of fact, he is a good deal laughed at. If he were not so absorbed in himself, his feelings would be hurt. Incidentally, however, he might change his manner. To me he is particularly interesting because he represents a survival. Most people of his type have disappeared. In my acquaintance he is the only example. After an encounter with him I always think with pleasure of the burden lifted from the world by the decline in this kind of arrogance.

Everyone of us has an opportunity to be arrogant toward some people. Indeed, certain expressions of arrogance run from the apex to the base of the organization we call society. Fortunately, our national ideals, influenced by the national fondness for humor, have modified the more glaring expressions. With us arrogance shown in personal demeanor is comic. On the street it would create derision and invite the irreverent attention of the small boy.

There is another type of arrogance that is happily declining, often called intellectual. It used to flourish in the colleges and universities. It repre-

## THE DECLINE OF ARROGANCE

sented vanity and conceit carried to a painful extreme. It has given way before the spread of education which has carried with it a new understanding of what education really means and what it ought to do for mankind. College professors are ceasing to be the remote, critical, dehumanized creatures that used to be established in the popular imagination and that, to a large extent, weakened their influence. They are realizing that the closer they reach to the common life of man the greater becomes their service and their real worth. It is only seldom one sees the inflated intellectual that used to flaunt himself so proudly before the world, speaking a sonorous print-language, beating down the vulgar who presumed to disagree with him and setting himself up as an authority.

Though we don't hear much about humility nowadays and though, as a virtue, it is scarcely recognized, there has been a vast increase, in recent years, of the appearance of humility, if not the reality. I suspect that one reason is the spread of enlightenment through present day facilities of popular reading, of transportation, of social intercourse. There has been a realization that the wide differences between human beings are largely unreal, that their apparent reality comes from differences of opportunity. Once great bodies of men could be treated by some of their more favored brothers as if they were the scum of the earth. Words, expressing this kind of attitude, could be openly spoken and without danger to life or limb. Now they would be likely to be disastrous. Throughout the world there is growing a wholesome respect, even among those who at heart are still deeply arrogant, for man as man.

### THE DECLINE OF ARROGANCE

The relief from such displays is incalculable. We don't think of it till we meet one of the rare survivals of the old type. But we can get an idea of it by thinking of the general decline of boasting. It still goes on in the world, of course. It will probably never stop. But it has obviously been put on the defensive by humor. There are comparatively few nowadays who dare to boast of their ancestry or of their superior personal merit or of their culture. One superiority alone has the power to create awe among us, money. To a millionaire almost any form of self-assertion is permissible. In his presence even our humor falters and grows dumb.

## BEING SUSPICIOUS

A MOTHER of my acquaintance repeatedly suspects her children of lying, whether she has reason or not. She does not know that she has both fostered lying in them and weakened their respect for her. Through denying them her confidence she has made it impossible for them to trust her. As they grow older they become more expert in making her the victim of their deceit. She has kept them in an atmosphere of suspicion where deceit flourishes.

All kinds of evil flourish in suspicion. It is a perpetual breeder of the qualities that instantly work for evil, including secrecy and resentment.

There are people that pride themselves on their moral cleanliness and, nevertheless, keep their minds unclean with suspicion. Though they may not do evil themselves, they attribute evil to others, often without any cause whatsoever. Indeed, to be suspicious is to throw open the mind to thoughts of evil, which are almost certain to lead to unfortunate reactions. The confiding people are often taken advantage of by others and deceived; the suspicious people continually deceive themselves and put themselves at a disadvantage. By thinking the worst of others they help to cause others to appear at their worst. For suspicion is creative in its nature. It can bring out and develop the very evils it conceives.

## BEING SUSPICIOUS

I know a man whose life is embittered by suspicion. He is never wholly free from its influence. He lets it betray itself in the most curious and subtle ways. Repeatedly, by his manner or by his attitude, it forces him to say to acquaintances and friends and relatives: "I don't trust you." Naturally, he finds himself involved in a multitude of complications and subject to a great deal of resentment. His suspicious habit makes the world a hideous place to him and he is continually finding grounds for his concern and verification. It has even had a physical influence on him, both in his face and his bearing, causing him to draw his eyes and his lips tight and to cramp his shoulders.

It is marvelous how ingenious and plausible suspicion is. It has a kind of genius of its own for finding apparent justification. In chance, particularly in coincidence, it has a great ally. Every day warns us to beware of circumstantial evidence. It can of all things be one of the most misleading. But suspicion loves it and eagerly seizes on it and puts it to the worst possible use. The suspicious people all understand. Often, when they believe evil of others on account of circumstantial evidence, they are suddenly confronted with the truth that exposes the folly and the unkindness of their own thinking. Do they profit by the lesson? Usually, no. The next time their suspicions begin to work they are eager to co-operate and to become its victims.

The suspicious people live in a world of misery and disaster. Nearly every day they live contributes to their misery. That they are themselves the

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main cause they never suspect. It is an object lesson to hear them tell of their experiences. Sometimes they nourish certain suspicions for years or for a lifetime, absolutely without good reason, and drawing themselves into distressing complications by their reprisals, losing friends and harboring in the mind wholly gratuitous resentments. It is pitiful at times to observe the ravages they cause, not only to themselves but to others perfectly innocent.

Suspicion and jealousy are closely related. At times it is not easy to distinguish between them. Suspicious people are likely to be jealous and jealous people are always suspicious. Indeed, jealousy feeds largely on suspicion. There are many who allow their happiness to be destroyed by their suspicious attitude toward those nearest and dearest. Their very affection gives them the suspicious feelings and thoughts that go by the name of jealousy. These thoughts and feelings may be like insanity and so contemptible and revolting as to destroy respect and affection in those they are directed against.

Suspicion, seemingly ferreting out and exposing the weaknesses and the evil deeds of others, is really in itself an exposure. It exposes the mind and the character working so insidiously and diabolically, ugly in themselves and conserving ugliness and trying to match it with reality. And yet most suspicions are unreal, even those that seem to find verification. In nearly every instance there is a difference between suspicion and confirmation, usually a wide difference. And often where there is apparent confirmation it is not confirmation at all. There are people who are so certain their suspicions are

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sound that there is no convincing them of the truth. They prefer to keep themselves deceived.

To be suspicious is to make oneself the friend and intimate of evil. It is to ally oneself with all the evil forces in the world. Through thinking so much of evil, through being constantly on the watch for it, the suspicious people make observations that are, at times, seemingly amazing in acuteness. But even here they do themselves harm, by gaining more and more confidence in their suspicions, by making themselves more and more enslaved. Their loss may be understood by all of us by reflecting on what they would gain if their minds had taken the direction of good, allying them to all the forces for health.

As a rule, however, the suspicious people are great blunderers. They become one-sided. So acute are they in their search for evil that they can see it where it does not exist. Moreover, by spreading their unfounded suspicions they start wholly gratuitous forces of evil coming from their own minds.

There are few trials in life harder to bear than to be unjustly suspected. It can drive the best-natured people into fury. It can destroy friendship and create ill-feeling for a lifetime, poisoning the source of happiness. But the suspicious people seem not to care. So great is their confidence in their suspicions, so deep is their pride in their acumen, that, in their zeal to betray others, they will go out of their way to betray themselves. They are, however, more to be pitied than blamed. The harm they do to those about them is shared by many. The

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harm they do to themselves they have to bear alone. Among them will be found the saddest and the most forlorn of human kind. Yet often, among them, too, may be found many characters otherwise admirable, seemingly fitted to give and to enjoy happiness. But if we could look into their lives we should find that, like all suspicious people, they had suffered from long trains of misery, according to their belief started by others, but really started by themselves.

## LOVE

A EUROPEAN physician has said something new about love. He has discovered that it is good for the nerves. It would seem to follow that, in case of nerve trouble, it ought to be prescribed.

But can even the greatest nerve specialist in the world prescribe love for any one? Is not love one of those things that come of their own initiative or don't come? I have known people who have thought so much about love that they seemed to drive it away. At any rate, they were so conscious of their mental state that they apparently had no power to escape from themselves. And love means essentially self-abandonment, self-forgetfulness.

Now we know that most nervous people are abnormally concerned about themselves. They become tormented with introspection. If they could only fall in love they would surely escape this fundamental cause of disease.

The reasoning is so simple that it is odd no physician ever made the discovery before.

And yet we all know that love, that is, young love, often called "falling in love," has a marvelous effect on the health. We recognize it indirectly. We say of this girl or that who has lately become engaged: "How much better she is looking." We see that her eyes are brighter; her cheeks have more color; she carries herself more lightly and yet with more vigor. Through all her being there is evidently a new infusion of vital energy.

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The same results unquestionably take place in a man. But we are not nearly so interested in men who are in love as in women. So we don't pay so much attention.

Besides, when a pretty girl grows prettier, or when a girl not usually considered pretty becomes pretty, as often happens under the influence of love, the event is of sensational interest.

Why is it that love produces effects so remarkable? Let us see if we can find out.

In the first place, when people fall in love they not only change themselves, but in their eyes the whole world changes. They may have been commonplace or dull before. But once in love they take on a strange brightness. And however uninteresting and dreary the world may have seemed to them, it at once becomes a fairyland.

"Life is great!" a young lover wrote to me a few weeks ago in announcing his engagement. He had just made the discovery. And what was the most interesting feature in his mind was his firm conviction that life would always be great. The abounding joy of living he was convinced he should always feel.

Here is one of the most beautiful effects of love, its confidence not only in the present, but in the future as well. Cynics may declare that it is only the deceitful way nature uses to make human beings perform her will. To such a view all lovers are indifferent. In their confidence they bind themselves to one another, not for a day only, not even for a lifetime, but for eternity.

In the abundant health that love gives to so many

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lovers we may perhaps find one of the provisions of nature. And as for nature's not keeping promises, who can say that the fault is nature's alone?

After all, what nature does is to say to lovers: "See what a beautiful and delightful and stimulating state love is! Now I have shown you the path of happiness. Stay there or not, as you choose."

It is when love takes on responsibilities that it most frequently wanders from the path. And yet there are those who say that by meeting responsibilities noble lovers find, not a decrease, but an increase of love, a change that has all the signs of natural development.

Cannot we all learn something from love, even those of us who may not be professed lovers? The teachers of the new cults, of mental and moral healing, go so far as to say that all they know has been learned through love. The foundation of their philosophy is love, and the inspiration, too. In it they declare there is the only health. In its enemy, hate, they find the only disease, the only cause of death. Surely there are many expressions of love besides the one that has been allowed to usurp the word. The love of the youth for the maiden and of the maiden for the youth is only one form of the love that radiates through the whole world, the sunshine of life from which we all derive our health and our energy.

In many cases it is startling to see the resemblance between love and hate. It is very clearly shown in certain kinds of animals. Often the male acts as if the female were his enemy. And the female retaliates with resentment and anger, sometimes real,

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sometimes sham. Similarly, among human beings, there are moments when love is less spiritual than physical. In such cases the lovers often act as if they were foes. They seem to delight in giving pain to each other. Here is one of the most curious expressions of the egotism of love, of the pleasure the lover takes in displaying power over the loved one, who loves in return. Sometimes the interplay of this egotism makes an undercurrent of pain all through the relation of the lovers. Almost invariably it leads to the destruction of love.

Where lovers frequently change the object of their affections one may be reasonably sure to find that they are inspired by a false kind of love. Indeed, it is often referred to in terms related to the chasing and hunting of animals. It is recognized that in such love there is something of the instinct to capture and to injure, perhaps to destroy. Among men there are lovers who take their chief delight in injuring women. In their successes they find not merely indulgence of the senses, but gratification of their egotism. They achieve a wretched illusion of superiority for which they may be ready to make any sacrifice. Some women, knowing this masculine weakness, play upon it, and sometimes prey upon it, making it the means of securing for themselves advantages, imaginary and real, including the gratification of their own egotism and vanity, the flattery of their sense of power.

Those that play with love in this way are either reckless or courageous. Playing with fire is a mild comparison. They play with what may be even more dangerous, and, in its effects, more lasting, dis-

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position. As love is the concentration of life, the intensification of human relations, it brings, as the result of the habits we call character, great punishments and rewards. For this reason, to some natures, love appeals to the instinct of adventure not unlike the gambler's. On the other hand, there are those that, once burned, as we say, are careful for the rest of their lives. A few become so bitter against love that they will have no more of it. Their special experience they may identify with all love, a narrow way of looking at the most powerful force in life, so necessary to life that the two are, in a sense, identical.

All life is a preparation for love, for success in a hazardous enterprise or for failure. Just as virtue leads to healthy living, on the other hand, in love, one can often trace what, on the surface at any rate, seems curiously like punishment for sins heretofore unpunished. As the miser develops an inordinate capacity for loving money, to money he becomes enslaved. The sensualist becomes enslaved to sensuality. In exactly the same way the practice and the love of virtue leads to the most beautiful of all kinds of slavery, the richest in its rewards.

There are some sins, perhaps not recognized as sins, that tend to destroy love. For example, the selfish and the egotistical and the tyrannical, when they love, soon express in love their selfishness, their egotism and their tyranny. To those they love they are unable to show the qualities that help to make love thrive. Often they wonder why they are so unfortunate. They look out on the world and they blame life. They sometimes go through life without

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suspecting that the blame lies in their own natures. On the other hand, we often see those apparently unworthy of being loved, who nevertheless receive love in abundance. Their cases are exceptional. It is their luck to be loved by generous and forgiving natures, natures that perhaps love not less but more on account of the weakness that they see, appealing to the pity that is often so close to love as to be confused with love itself.

To nearly all people love is at some time given. To most people love is given at all times, that is, some kind of love. At least once in nearly every life romantic love comes. But why should we make such sharp differentiations in the matter of love? Are not all kinds of love in their nature essentially identical? In children one of the first things we notice is whether they are affectionate. We know that affection is a natural quality. Some of us, in our attitude toward those close to us, are far more affectionate than others. And some of us have far more than others the capacity for developing affection. For love, like every other human quality, increases with exercise. The more we love the more we are able to love, and the more we love the more skilful we become in expressing love ourselves and in retaining the love of others.

It is in keeping the love of others that most of us woefully fail. And we fail very largely because we are not careful in expressing love. Here we ought not to be confused by terms. Expressing love does not necessarily mean using the language of endearment. On the contrary, those who love most deeply are likely to be the least given to endearing

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terms. The use of endearing terms may indicate the absence of deep love, or the absence of any love. The language of love lies deeper than words. It lies in thoughts and in attitudes of mind. If we take a loving attitude toward our fellow creatures and if we think loving thoughts of them, we cannot express ourselves in hateful sounds or words or through any of the expressions that create pain and resentment and hate.

In a large number of instances failure in love is due to self-love. There are those so completely absorbed in themselves that they cannot escape. They actually try to make love an expression of egotism, to change its nature. For as we all know, real love is altruism. It is finding oneself through giving up oneself.

At a country house where I once spent a few days I met a very practical business man, a distinct type, often seen in this country, bent on money-making and very successful, who was visiting there with his pretty wife. One morning he asked me to go out to walk with him. For a while we walked in silence. At last he broke out: "Say, I suppose people in your business do a lot of thinking and theorizing about life. Now there's something I want to talk over with you." Then he proceeded to tell me that he felt his marriage was breaking down. His wife didn't care for him any more. There wasn't any other man, or anything of that kind. She was a good woman. But she was dissatisfied and listless and unhappy. "What's the matter with women, nowadays, anyway?" he said at the end. "They don't seem to be satisfied with anything. I've got plenty of money and I give my wife every-

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thing she wants." As he went on talking I began to wonder if his case were not the common one of the practical man that thought happiness could come from material possessions and that knew nothing whatever about the finer sensibilities either of men or women. However, I offered no suggestions. It was plain that all this sufferer wanted was the relief of talking the situation over. My business served as an excuse for his pouring out his woes in my ears. During the rest of the visit I had what seemed to be a revelation of his failure in marriage. He repeatedly contradicted his wife. In the small details of his relation with her he kept indulging himself. She, more adroit, kept dodging out of the way of his egotism, humoring him, and, at the same time, drawing farther and farther away. He had no suspicion that in those little encounters he was striking at his happiness or that his success in business, by fostering his habit of continually striving for his own way, had inhibited success in marriage.

It is the small things in life that foster or weaken love. They may be hardly traceable. For this reason the records of our divorce courts are extremely misleading. The real causes may be far out of sight. Is love to be kept, then, by constantly being on one's guard? Surely not. The truth is, it seems to me, that the small things are in themselves unimportant. They are only manifestations, betrayals. What is important is the spirit behind them. If the spirit is right, the trifles will take care of themselves. As in all life, what counts in love is, not doing or seeming, but being. That troubled husband boasted of what he did for his wife. He did not even consider what he meant to her, what he was.

## "GOD'S POOR "

**T**HREE is an expression, once commonly heard, that seems to be going out of fashion: "God's poor." It used to be spoken with great sympathy and reverence. It conveyed on the part of the speakers a sense of beautiful understanding, even of nobility.

I thought of it the other day when I heard an English traveler telling of his experience in India. Quite seriously he remarked that much of the poverty there was due to the decline of war, famine and pestilence, attributed to the beneficent influence of the English conquerors. "These three forces used to keep poverty down," he remarked. "They removed the physically unfit. They left behind those who were best equipped for the battle of life."

In war, famine and pestilence, the world used to see, or fancied that it saw, the hand of God. According to this view, God gathered in vast multitudes of his poor.

He also gathered in many of the physically weak.

It should be remembered, by the way, that many of those considered unfit, by the physical standards, have done great work in the world. Think of the distinguished writers that have won fame by good work done in spite of weakness of one kind or another.

Of the three forces, war, seemingly the most terrible, was really the least effective. It mowed down comparatively few. They were, to be sure, in the flower of their youth. They represented what

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under favoring conditions might have been of immense value to society. But, by being for the most part God's poor, through destruction, they gave a better chance to those lucky enough not to be included among God's poor.

Famine, too, was not nearly so efficacious as it might have been. It often let vast numbers of people struggle on by means of the resistance of nature. It showed how close to starvation people could live without dying. It kept God's poor, however, so unfit physically and mentally that they had little chance to compete with the others who shared in the battle of life.

Pestilence was the great force. It used to sweep away whole villages. Wherever it went it carried fearful devastation. For those able to resist its attack it left a multitude of advantages, in the way of worldly possessions and of opportunities for profit and for advancement. By the control of pestilence, those of us who, even under adverse conditions, could manage to keep healthy and strong were obliged to forego great benefits.

In former times God's poor were so loved by God that they had a precarious tenure on earth. They would disappear in swarms. Just now there are those who go so far as to deny the continued existence of God's poor. In fact they say that the terrible poverty of mediaeval and ancient days has been driven out of the world. "Where are the poor people that the radicals and reformers are always talking about?" a rich man recently asked in my hearing. He looked around, as if in search. His tone and the expression on his face showed some indignation.

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A radical, who happened to be present, quietly answered: "They are everywhere. If you don't happen to see them it is because you don't recognize them as you meet them in the street. They live, for the most part, down in the quarters where you never go. There are people all about us who are on the verge of want. Throughout the big cities there are millions who are underfed and who perish through poverty. The disease is simply called by other names."

The questioner shrugged his shoulders. "It is probably their own fault," he replied airily dismissing the subject.

This attitude interested me. It was so different from the attitude expressed by the words "God's poor." It was characteristic of many people at this time. So often they were heard blaming the poor for being shiftless and thriftless and lazy and good for nothing. They forgot the part played in their own lives by luck, by advantage, by privilege, by the physical and mental and moral conditions that helped to make them fit, that gave them special equipment for the battle of life.

In the Legislature of a great State among the many foolish bills presented during the last session, there was one designed to abolish poverty; in other words, to make impossible the existence of the thriftless and the shiftless and the incompetent, and to keep human beings from becoming "God's poor." Of course, such a bill could create only derision and resentment. "There must be poor people in the world," a New York society woman remarked in a speech a few months ago. "We can't all be rich."

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Here, perhaps, unconsciously she uttered a profound truth. Where there are extremes of advantage there must be extremes of disadvantage. Giving up the poor might signify that we should have to give up the rich. We must do everything we can to keep the world from meeting such a disaster.

Then there are those people, always well fed and well dressed, who like to quote the saying: "The poor ye have always with you." They seem to regard this saying as a justification and a prophecy. It really is neither. It is a mere statement, and it does not go into the future. By being a mere statement, it might also be called an arraignment. The truth is that we have the poor always with us because we are willing to let them remain poor, because, by leaving them to the mercy of God, we make them feel how little mercy there is in man.

A reader once took me to task for some remarks of mine about Charles Dickens. With truth he said that I recognized the influence of poverty in the shaping of Dickens' career and yet I seemed to deprecate poverty. He added that most men of great achievement had worked from poverty into success. He evidently regarded poverty, not as a curse, but as a blessing.

It is true that many great men, in youth, knew the hardships of poverty. Some of them remained poor to the end of their days. It is not true, however, that all notable men have known poverty. There are many examples to the contrary. Think of our own Roosevelt. He was born to wealth and he has always had plenty of means. It will at once be said that, among men born to wealth, he is an excep-

#### "GOD'S POOR"

tion. So he is. In this regard he is exactly like all able men. They are all exceptions in their class and in their humankind. They succeed in spite of handicaps. And there is no doubt that there are handicaps in both wealth and poverty. The rich man's son, as a rule, lacks incentive. The poor man's son, as a rule, lacks opportunity.

Dickens was not a great writer because he was poor or because he had to fight his way to success. His talents were inborn. They happened to be sustained by certain personal qualities that enabled him to make his way against difficulties. If he had not possessed those qualities, the zest for living, a strong competitive spirit, great industry, and ability to utilize every advantage, he might not have achieved his wonderful career. On the other hand, far more than we can realize now, he may have been aided by chance, which often works so mysteriously and effectually. If he had not been born poor he could not have understood poverty with his extraordinary insight and sympathy; but he might have understood other phases of life. His success, far from being an argument in favor of poverty, offers an illustration of the rich talent that is buried in poverty. Now and then, as in the case of Dickens, it comes to the surface. As a rule, it is either destroyed or denied expression. Where we produce one great writer like Dickens we lose a hundred great writers. The chances are that such writers as are saved and developed are not those whose talents are the richest. They are those whose talents are accompanied by the qualities most serviceable in competitive life. Now such qualities are often denied to genius. And where genius has to rely on them there is sure to be

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failure, unless by a miracle, chance comes to the rescue. A great deal of undeveloped and lost talent has belonged among God's poor.

There is no doubt of course that poverty develops much that is precious in life, not talent or genius alone, but valuable qualities of character. But it does vastly more harm than good. Whenever a man succeeds in spite of poverty we recognize the wonder and eagerly give it acclaim. But the failures resulting from poverty we pass over. Indeed, they are so common as to be almost uninteresting. We speak of them by the bulk, in the mass.

The chief work of poverty we know to be the creation of squalor and disease and vice, leading to the weakening of body, the destruction of character and to the loosening on society of a vast number of baleful influences. So many diseases that we once regarded as personal, the result of individual sin, we now know to be merely expressions of this most fearful of all diseases. No wonder then that human beings are beginning to realize the importance of co-operating for the purpose of destroying such a foe.

If the time ever comes when there is no longer poverty in the world, there will be a wonderful freedom for the higher qualities of the human race. Men will then work, not because they are driven by the competitive spirit, but from a higher impulse, love of work itself. The chances are that if a man like Dickens had been free to work in this way he would have done not more work, perhaps even less, but work of finer and higher polish. For Dickens, as an artist, suffered till the end from poverty. If he had had more advantages in early youth his tal-

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ents would have been better trained. He would have had more taste and more balance. He would have striven less for popular and transient effect than for the truth, for what was permanent and of universal appeal.

Every writer knows how limiting the mere desire for popularity can be to creative work. By having constantly to keep in mind the importance of sustaining his success, of appealing to the popular taste, Dickens was continually kept back. If he could have worked for work's sake, he might have produced far greater masterpieces than those now associated with his fame. In this way he might have helped to bring popular taste to a higher level.

Under our present system, though every great man is recognized as a leader, he is also led. He is obliged constantly to regard popular favor as a check. Often it operates on his finest instincts and his best impulses. Until the fear is removed of loss of favor, with its resulting material disadvantages, there cannot be any real freedom for art. So when we talk about the beauty of poverty we use an absurd phrase. As a matter of fact, there is no more beauty in poverty than there is in sickness of any sort, or in sin. Like sin, poverty may call out the very noblest qualities in human nature among the strong. But the damage it does far outweighs any gain it has conferred on humanity and offers no excuse for its being allowed to go on in the world. Besides the tests of poverty there are plenty of other tests. These include the persistent striving that results, not from the desire for one's own selfish achievement, but from devotion to a service that is much greater than one's self.

## WORDS

OFTEN in life we find illustrations of our control by words. So many of us seem to live largely by words alone. Without words we should be at sea. On the other hand, there are those that live in the realm of ideas, the few. But even they must often find words getting in their way and creating confusion. On the other hand, they must often be dependent on words, too. And through the use of words there is much by all of us to be learned.

Some time ago a woman of my acquaintance found herself growing more and more depressed. There was apparently no reason. She was happy in her home relations and she had a great deal to live for. After a time, however, she seemed to have lost the savor of life. When she would complain to her friends they would argue with her and tell her that she ought to feel ashamed. Many of them grew impatient with her and resentful. At last she was persuaded to go to a doctor. After a careful examination the doctor said that she was suffering from neurasthenia. Now those impatient friends could understand. The trouble had been given a name. It took on reality through being identified with a word.

It is true that actions speak louder than words. But words often speak louder than those who use them realize. By the words we apply to people

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and to things we tell a great deal about ourselves. I know a man who frequently has on his lips such words as "fool," "idiot," "imbecile," "ass," and "coward." He thinks that he is depicting certain types of character. But he is mistaken. From him those words carry very little direct meaning. Most of the people he applies the words to are imperfectly designated or designated not at all. But the words all reveal a quality in the man's nature in a way that is absolutely convincing.

It is amusing to hear some people stating two sides of an argument. The side they disagree with they describe in unflattering words, perhaps damaging. But their own side they try to make attractive with pleasant words. Though they may be unfair in expressing the arguments, they are fair in expressing themselves.

When I was in college there was a professor of philosophy that I shall always remember for one habit. Opinions that he did not accept he would state not only with fairness but with generosity. In listening to him one might have fancied that he really agreed. Afterward, he would quietly explain why he disagreed. Great as the value of his teaching was, the value of his example was much greater. I don't believe that during the whole year, when he considered a wide range of ideas, he ever used an unfriendly or an unpleasant word.

It might be a salutary practice for each of us to watch the number of disagreeable words that we use in a day. We should doubtless be surprised. In thinking over the words it might be worth our

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while to consider what they signified. If we were frank we should receive a lesson in humility through finding that we were much less broad-minded than we thought, much less tolerant and much less willing to give freedom of opinion and of action than to take it for ourselves.

We speak of words as if they were merely expressive. But they are creative, too. When we use friendly words, if they are sincere, they react in us and develop good feeling. When we use unfriendly words we develop unfriendliness. There are times, it is true, when an explosion of ill-feeling brings relief. But oftener, instead of decreasing the ill-feeling, it creates more. Putting an evil thought into words gives the evil greater reality and power. Ability to resist the impulse to speak evil is one of the finest of gifts. It not only holds the evil in check, keeping it from rushing out to the world in little messages of evil, but it tends to destroy the evil, provided, of course, that the evil is not lived over in those silent words that torment the mind.

There is another kind of resistance to words that may do mischief. Every now and then we are called on to speak generously. If we refuse no one else may be the wiser. But we know that the refusal to speak has done us harm. It has made us shrink ever so little. We are fortunate if it has made us feel small. Now we are getting the best kind of punishment, the kind that comes from ourselves and that teaches us. Next time we may know better.

For our own sake, if not for the sake of others, it is well for us to avoid those words that are like

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little sacks of poison. Though we may think that we break the poison into the world outside we really take it into our system. The mere emphasis on certain words carries its danger. We all know people who make life harder for themselves by using such words as "fearful," "terrible," "dreadful," "horrible," and "ghastly." Invariably those words make their effect on us by reaction.

One of the kindest-hearted men I know has the habit of using violent language. It has acquired mastery over him, as drink might have done or a drug. At the least provocation he will break into profanity. The mention of the name of a man that he dislikes or that has offended him will make him break out into an opprobrious term, common enough among men and yet, if spoken in the presence of the man it is aimed at, considered justification enough for assault or even murder. The result is that he has developed a great fund of ill-feeling. Every time he uses one of those violent expressions he speaks angrily and loudly and he becomes red in the face. He would be astonished if he knew how, in apparently attacking others so bitterly and foolishly, he was really attacking himself and making himself more abjectly his own victim. Incidentally, he is a great disturber of the peace. He also makes a great many enemies. Though he seldom attacks anyone directly, his censorious words are often repeated and reach the people censured, and, though his friends appreciate his good qualities, he is pretty generally disliked and by many he is avoided.

Another man of my acquaintance never uses violent or exaggerated expressions. On the contrary,

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in his speaking, he is always considerate. One result is that, not only are his words pleasant to hear, but the tone of his voice is almost invariably quiet and agreeable. I don't think I have ever heard him use one of the many words in our language that contain ill-feeling, not only expressing it, but developing it in the mind. It is a great object lesson to hear him discuss people and ideas that he does not approve of. Unconsciously he opens up his mind and shows that it is serene and healthy, like a well-kept and well-aired room.

There is one amusing quality often betrayed by men who do a good deal of swearing, their self-satisfaction. They think they are doing something creditable. They are merely, of course, yielding to self-indulgence and vanity. Boys show this weakness very conspicuously. Indeed, most of them swear in imitation of their elders for the purpose of being manly. Nearly all swearers develop in themselves the habit of self-torment. Their swearing adds fuel to the fire of their resentment and anger. There are few men who can use resentful words, of which swearing provides extreme examples, without becoming bitterly resentful.

We often hear that thoughts are things. In more than the merely literal sense, words are things, too. Often ideas are injured by the words they are made to use. Just now there is a good deal of public concern about free speech. In this regard we have more freedom than we had a few years ago. Indeed the freedom is almost sensational. Subjects taboo a few years ago are now openly discussed. But it looks as if we might be on the verge of reac-

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tion. The reason is, not that the freedom is in itself dangerous, but that it has been abused by the unwise use of words. As a matter of fact, any subject can be talked about without giving offense if the words are considerately chosen. What is offensive in freedom of speech is not freedom itself. It is the bad taste that is likely to go with the freedom, the inconsiderateness, the bravado, the expressions of intellectual or moral superiority, always seeking for release through subtle disguises.

One of the most objectionable men I have ever known is an advocate of the new freedom. He takes pleasure in shocking people with his talk. He thinks that he is displaying breadth and frankness and daring, as well as a superiority to crippling conventions. He is merely using words that in themselves contain offense and that both express and develop vulgarity. Nearly everything he says could be expressed with equal frankness without offending anyone. The more he uses the offensive words the more he becomes a slave to the bad qualities that lie beneath them. In his imagined assertion of freedom he betrays his own slavery.

In arguing, the considerate use of words is always attractive. Indeed, it tends to inhibit all ill-feeling and to put an end to argument. For most of our arguing is not really maintained for the sake of ideas or of truth. It is for the gratification of our own egotistical selves, for the sake of winning, showing ourselves superior. For its maintenance it relies very largely on adroit misuse of words, on clever, insincere hair-splittings, on unfair restatements of remarks from the other side, on covert

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substitution, on the use of those words that contain and develop ill-feeling. One amusing consequence of argument where the ill-feeling becomes strong is that the disputants often find themselves arguing over points where they actually agree. Sometimes they change positions, like two prizefighters dodging round a ring.

Words are a great convenience and they are a great nuisance. The confusion of tongues is by no means Biblical alone. It must have existed long before that tragic and comic disaster and it exists today. In some ways we should be far better off if we never used words. There are those who think that, in this matter of confusion, learning helps. But it may be the means of making confusion worse confounded. Many of the greatest abusers and the most pitiful victims of words are the intellectuals, so highly cultivated that they soar beyond the realm of everyday sympathy with its profound implications and its simple and wholesome relations. The truth is, it seems to me, that the matter is not intellectual at all. It goes deeper, into the realm of the warm human feeling that alone can be a guide in our communication with one another. Words that express and inspire ill-feeling, no matter how refined or clever they may be, have no legitimate place in the world.

## SELF

✓ “**I** WILL have a care of being a slave to myself,” says Seneca. “For it is a perpetual, a shameful serving, the heaviest of all servitudes.”

To get away from self is really the secret of all striving. And yet, most of us fail woefully. The more many of us try the more tightly we seem to be bound.

A saintly old woman once consulted a hypnotist. She explained that she wished him to put her into a hypnotic sleep and to impress deeply on her mind a prayer that she had written: “Lord, I ask you each day to place a heavy burden upon me so that I may bear it cheerfully for your sake.”

The words seem absurd.

But are they really so?

Are they not a declaration of complete spiritual independence? Considered from the point of view of self-mastery, they suggest the eagerness of the athlete to meet the tests of strength and endurance.

That woman, by her spirit, had already conquered fate. Whatever might come, her spirit could overcome. So far as the trials of this world were concerned she had made herself immune.

The attitude of most people is rather different. We usually fail to keep in mind the lesson of experience that burdens cheerfully and nobly borne cease to be burdens. Our habit of meeting burdens signifies our enslavement. We let the burdens fall upon

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us until we feel almost crushed. To their weight we add the weight of our heavy spirit.

Saddest of all, with most of us, our burdens are of our own making. They result from the very assertion of self, its superiorities, its privileges, its rights, its ideas.

Those of us who claim most for ourselves in this world are sure to find our claims turned into resentment. Life, instead of being harmonious, grows turbulent, wearisome, depressing.

Often when we think we are fighting the world we are fighting ourselves.

It is to find reconciliation with ourselves that most of us are struggling. And we are likely to be surprised when, happening to do something that is not in any way related to self, we experience an interval of joy. We are fortunate if we see its meaning. Then we are in a position to follow Professor John Dewey's wise advice, "Prolong those moments."

It is by constantly forgetting ourselves and by constant dedication to claims outside ourselves that permanent happiness may be achieved. ✓

In dealing with our ideas we meet one of our greatest obstacles. The reason may be traced to what is the most curious and baffling of all illusions. We are misled into thinking of our ideas as things apart from ourselves, as belonging to a sphere that we call "truth," whereas they are really expressions of ourselves. In a sense, they are ourselves in the most limited and futile sense of the word. When we fight for them we are not, as we fondly believe, fighting for noble things outside. We are not

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doing an unselfish thing. We are doing the most selfish of all things, trying to impose ourselves on other people, taking something from them so that we may substitute something of ourselves in its place, cheating them of a part of themselves so that we may have the illusion that we are making ourselves greater.

Good ideas do not need to be shouted. They can take care of themselves. Often they are most effective when they are quietly presented, without the distraction of force, with all the personal intrusion that goes with force. Indeed, of all the foes of good ideas, the most dangerous and harmful may be the very people that stand as their advocates. Unconsciously those who listen may reason with themselves in some such way as: "Do those ideas make this kind of character?" For we are all influenced in our judgments by association. Some of the most generous ideas are put forward by people obviously not generous. No wonder they fail to find ready acceptance. The deadliest enemies of Christianity have been those who have made the celebrating of Christian ideals an excuse for the expression of their own ill will.

Is it not possible that we should never fight for the ideas that we so foolishly separate from ourselves, that we should even be ready to subordinate our ideas, just as we should be ready to subordinate ourselves for some unselfish purpose?

What is meant then by subordinating ideas? Simply that we should keep silent and avoid self-assertion when by such assertion there is the least

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risk of imposition, of the crippling of others. There is only one effective way of imposing an idea. That is by expressing the idea through living, by making it beautiful in expression. Then it reveals itself without causing pain or injury of any kind.

If we keep our ideas in the head they are certain to be egotistical ideas, expressing that part of us which is least worthy. If they reach from the head to the heart, enveloping themselves with the beauty of good feeling and sound living, they cease to be egotistical. They cease to be merely personal. They ally themselves with the generous emotions, the inspiring forces of life.

The claim of the self in time of trouble is the means of doubling and trebling pain. "Why should such a misfortune come on me?" is a thought that often runs through the consciousness. If the cause were traced to its source it would often be found to lie in the very concern for self shown in those words. As a matter of fact, too, the misfortune is likely to be very common. No one ever suffers woe that has not been borne by multitudes of others. In the recognition of this circumstance alone there may be relief and inspiration and incentive to self-control and to healthy feeling.

The self is a great nuisance. If we could only get rid of it we should be relieved of a heavy burden; indeed, of nearly all our cares. Besides being a dead weight to carry, it is continually getting in our way and crippling us and throwing us into confusion and into personal complications. Without it we should be free. For the first time in our lives we should be able to work spontaneously, joyously,

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not for the sake of that vain little presence, but for the work itself. We should actually live all our waking time.

Let us watch ourselves in the course of the day and see how the self keeps interfering. It has the most ingenious ways of breaking in, through its assertions of vanity and conceit and egotism. These qualities seem to be its weapons. They really are the self. If we were to rid ourselves of them the self would perish.

When we think of the self in its real nature we see how ridiculous it is and how pitiful. But we make no new discovery. We have always known through our clear vision of the self in this friend or that acquaintance. Wherever we see self making assertions we recognize its weakness. The trouble is that we forget that our own self is exactly the same. For the self is the same the world over. Any difference that may be noted is only apparent. With one the self is more careful than with another under control of qualities that instinctively realize the menace in its nature. Those whose self is conspicuous we call selfish. And those whose self is inconspicuous we call self-abnegating or unselfish or humble. No matter which of the two classes we may belong to, the self within is always lurking, waiting for the chance to secure release and to take control and to exploit what it believes to be its superiority and what is always nothing but pretense and weakness.

I recently heard of a rich man of New York, one of the great millionaires, who expressed to a friend concern about the future of his young son. He

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wanted the boy to succeed to the property and to make it a means of leading a happy life. He knew that so much money could be, not a blessing, but a curse. He was determined to do everything he could to keep it from being a curse and to make it a blessing. So he proposed to give the boy the kind of training that should make him see the importance of being useful in the world, that should develop high ambitions. But in his plans that millionaire forgot to consider the self at all and the importance of teaching the boy to get rid of the self. His plans inevitably tended to make the self feel more and more important, more and more powerful, and more and more exacting, to take the boy further and further from that wonderful source of peace and of wisdom, humility.

Here is one of the great tragedies that result from superfluity in life. It need not be superfluity of money. It may be superfluity of opportunity or of ability or of good looks, providing food for the self.

The remark made in regard to an American statesman provides an illustration: "The impact of his personality was like a blow in the face."

The self, when it secures control, makes a startling impact. It disturbs harmony. But its force is an illusion, real only in the sense that it is sure to make a disturbing reaction. The strongest self is the weakest self. The less of self that people have the greater they are and the greater their power. The complete loss of self would mean the realization of complete being.

The self is so petty that the marvel is it does not shrink out of sight altogether. The more it asserts

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and claims the pettier it shows itself to be, and the more pitiable. There is not one of us that likes it in another, when we recognize it for what it is. But each of us likes the self in himself. And yet if we could gather together the selves of all the people in the world we should find that the features were virtually the same, expressing the same futility, the same weakness, the same essential unreality. There are those, on the other hand, who go so far as to say that the self has not and never has had actual existence, that it is a delusion. They call it by various names, fairly stripping it of attributes. By this method some of them apparently succeed in escaping from the self. The change in them is remarkable. They grow finer and stronger and greater. They show us that they have reached some mysterious source of power.

All the religious and many of the philosophists have advocated the abnegation of self. They regard it as the beginning and the end of wisdom, the opening to the infinite of the pores of being. In the language of philosophy, it is sometimes referred to as an escape to the larger self. Now there is none of the assertion and the apprehension and the fatuity and the disappointment that result from yielding to the petty self. On the contrary, there is absolute unconsciousness, there is ease and, best of all, there is a harmony within that expresses harmonious relations with the world outside.

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ON BEING told that a friend was about to go to live abroad I recently heard a group of people express great envy. "How lucky he is," said one.

Over the whole group there spread the gloom of those who see good fortune which they cannot share passing to another.

One sighed heavily. "I wish I had the chance," he said.

They all agreed that the opportunity was fine—to live in a great foreign city, to work there, to escape from old conditions and to revel in the new.

As I listened to the talk I was reminded of the Americans that I used to meet in Europe. Nearly all were dissatisfied and were longing to return home, even those who were transient visitors. Unhappiest of all were the Americans tied down to business there. Often they expressed bitterness over their fate. When they were parting from their American friends about to leave for home they would show both in their faces and in their words they were depressed with regret that they, too, were not going home.

And yet, those expatriated Americans, on leaving their own communities, had doubtless been not only delighted themselves at the prospect of change, but had been envied by the friends and acquaintances left behind.

We all love change. We are all exactly like the villagers of fable who looked up to the top of the

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mountain and longed to reach what they believed to be the paradise on the other side. Happy are those who can keep their longing merely an aspiration, an ideal. So often the worst that could happen to them would be realization, the scaling of the mountain and the reaching of the distant slopes. Perhaps, on the other hand, by realizing their longing, they might discover how dear the familiar conditions were to them, how rich in opportunities for peace and enjoyment.

There are, however, those who, in spite of repeated lessons, never learn this truth of common experience. Wherever they go they are dissatisfied. Perhaps this state of mind explains why so many Americans are continually crossing and recrossing the Atlantic. In the anticipation and in the act of change they find their only semblance of content.

The French people, far more stable than their reputation for instability concedes, marvel at the way Americans go tearing over the earth. Their love of their own country, of their own traditions, of their own point of view, and of their own speech, tends to keep them at home.

But with us restlessness has been carried to an amazing development. No wonder Americans are the most nervous nation in the world.

With many people restlessness is in itself a disease. Every one of us knows of such cases. At this moment I have in mind an acquaintance who cannot endure even agreeable monotony. I recall that during one winter in New York he moved three times, not because he was uncomfortable in any of the three places, but simply because he grew

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bored. He is one of those foolish people who take pride in being easily bored; he often boasts of the weakness. He seems to think that it shows a certain superiority, as most of us do when we boast of weaknesses. Through long fostering the weakness has naturally developed. He allows himself to grow tired of acquaintances and friends, even of pleasures. His whole life is spent in change. I sometimes wonder what will happen to him when changing itself becomes monotonous.

On the other hand, it is possible for dislike of change to become a weakness. There are those, who under certain circumstances, will suffer great inconvenience rather than make a change. We see well-to-do families who live in districts that have become unattractive because they have not the courage to break away from the old associations and to take root elsewhere. In the small affairs of life we are all more or less likely to be influenced by the dread of change. When we examine it, however, we find it made up, at least in part, of very attractive qualities. Devotion to old associations is certainly lovable. It may extend to people that we really don't care much about but have associated with for a long time. Husbands and wives, friends, even mere acquaintances, are often kept together by the influence of time. Many married couples, for example, would prefer to go on living unhappily rather than make the wrench of breaking the association of years. And many friends who instinctively irritate one another, find that, through time, their very irritation becomes enjoyable, perhaps delightful. I have known a friend to be seriously concerned when he found that an irritable friend had become suddenly amiable.

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In New York there is a writer of quaint fancies who for many years has lived in a dingy ramshackle hotel in a most unattractive quarter. Whenever his friends ask him why he likes to live there he invariably replies: "Oh, I pay so little for so many inconveniences." In this way he keeps his questioners from further interference. They smile at his humor and then indulge him. A few of them realize that what keeps him there is his dread of change. His dusty little rooms, filled with books and old-fashioned prints, express his character. They are really a part of him. The very place has become a part of him. To tear himself and his belongings away would be like tearing his flesh.

Many human beings are like plants. They flourish best in their own soil. When they are torn away they seldom thrive. Some natures strike so deep that to tear them up by the roots is to kill them. We all recognize the cruelty, for example, of making old people move from the home of years. Sometimes, after such a change, they quickly die. The old associations have become as vital to them as air. To the things about us we unquestionably give something of ourselves. After a long period they become identified with ourselves.

Jane Addams has told of a pathetic case that came within her experience in Chicago. An old woman who for many years had lived alone in a single room, struggling to keep alive, was finally told that she must go to the poorhouse. The room, with her little belongings, had become part of her life; but she had to yield. So she gathered up her things in a little battered trunk, and when the

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officer called for her he found her lying in despair on the floor, with her arms encircling the trunk. That trunk represented all that was left to her in life, all that could go with her to soothe and comfort her in the new conditions.

The people who most dread change are often the happy people. It is they who are able to establish not merely casual relations with the things and people that make up their life, but relations that are intimate, affectionate, deeply sympathetic. Of course, they have to pay. To them the moment must come when they are forced to choose between peace and profit. It is the people that are capable of changing and that know how to change quickly and wisely, that is, wisely from the point of view of the world, who achieve success in life. An American philosopher says that progress consists of a series of wrenches. Here he means to identify progress with success. Perhaps he is right. He is surely right in believing that success always means a series of wrenches to some people, if not to the victors, to the vanquished. The victors are those who, instead of suffering from wrenches, actually enjoy them, live by them, watch for them, and do what they can to create them.

A quaint old character died a few years ago. His name was D. W. Stockwell. He lived in Aurora, Illinois. For many years he was famous as "the man that stood still." At the time of the Civil War he conducted a general merchandise store in Aurora. There he sold the hoop-skirts worn at the time. He never succeeded in getting out of the hoop-skirt period. To the end of his life he continued to offer

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for sale hoop-skirts and other relics. These things he did not recognize as relics, however. He simply refused to accept what was new. Naturally, he saw his business decline. He became an object of ridicule. Visitors would go to his store to gratify their curiosity and to laugh. If his arrested development had not inhibited enterprise he might have turned it to profit. And if some adventurous spirit had come along and succeeded in controlling him he might have been exploited. He went his way peacefully to the end, however, believing that the world was wrong and that he was right.

A good many of us are like "the man that stood still" in at least one particular. Very few of us keep up to the times in all ways. If we could study the mind of the most advanced philosopher we should find that, in this way or in that, perhaps in many ways, he was reactionary. Often we hear the advanced people scoffing at others for holding old-fashioned or exploded views. And yet some of the views of these very scoffers may also be exploded and old-fashioned. Then, too, there is something to be said for those who look with suspicion on what is new. They create a conservatism that is not by any means so unwholesome as we are usually led to believe. They are like ballast: they keep the tornadoes and the sudden meaningless gusts from overturning the ship. From experience they know that some of the ideas called new will be laughed at tomorrow, and that before an idea can be tested there is required a long time for reflection. The people who keep back change are often exasperating. But they have their work to perform, highly important work, too. Their very

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opposition, besides helping to weed out the weak ideas, gives the true ideas greater strength. For an idea is not worth much unless it can sturdily make its way through opposition and display toughness of fiber.

Occasionally, as was the case with Stockwell, the opposition to change is manifestly absurd. And yet it may have a certain picturesqueness, too. At this moment I am reminded of an aged man that I used to see in the streets of New York, a well-known figure, living out his last years in wealth and honor, surrounded by grandchildren and great-grandchildren. As a young man he had become enamored of the neck stock, the kind that we now see in old portraits. He wore it to the day of his death. People used to turn and look after him as, straight and tall, like a mummy, he passed down Fifth avenue, a strange figure from the past. I used to wonder whether in his mind there lurked other resentments of change. Did he look with an alien and a hostile eye on the new civilization that had grown up about him? Were the people that he met as fantastic and as unreal to him as he was to us?

There is a certain pathos, too, in the attitude of those that object to change. It results from their lack of complete harmony with life. Ruskin was a notable example. In the civilization that was so rapidly and sensationnally developing under his study he saw many a menace to peace and to welfare. The introduction of steam as motive power, instead of filling him with wonder and delight, made him grieve. Now men that once made leisurely journeys in good old-fashioned coaches with

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plenty of time to observe the country would be tempted to go tearing about the earth like lunatics. And with the introduction of machinery there was sure to be a decline in those handicrafts where men could take pleasure and pride through the expression of initiative and personal skill. Only a few years ago some of us were tempted to smile at Ruskin for these very ideas. Now we are wondering if he was not at least partly right.

In my own acquaintance I know several people who grieve over the invention of the automobile. One keeps the resolve made several years ago never to enter what he calls a "motor vehicle." He is like those people that we read about who declared they would never enter a train. Most of us know at least one person who refuses to use a telephone. It is easy to blame this attitude of mind. But it is the inevitable expression of certain kinds of temperament. "Oh! I suppose I'm old-fashioned," is an expression often used by people of this kind. Even while they apologize, however, they are asserting their belief in the soundness of their own attitude.

Opposition to change does not become serious unless it leads to interference. Here unhappiness is inevitable. It is particularly distressing when it shows itself between the generations. It leads to those differences of opinion and conflicts that the Russian writers have so powerfully depicted, notably Turgenieff in "Fathers and Sons." It goes even deeper than opinion. It reaches the feelings, the affections. Those who object to what is new are controlled by the love of what is old. For this

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reason they ought to be treated with a good deal of patience. When we are tempted to be impatient we ought to remind ourselves that if we are not like them now we may be like them at almost any moment. For there is no knowing when we, too, may become controlled by a love for what is destined to pass and when we may find ourselves in the ranks of the old-fashioned and the reactionary.

## THE PERFECT MOTHER

SINCE the beginning of time I imagine that mothers have been praised. Surely they have been praised since the beginning of civilization. So they need no praise from me here. Their virtues are sufficiently recognized. And their faults are only an expression of their virtues. Usually, these faults are directly or indirectly associated with their desire to make their children happy.

Sometimes the faults of mothers lead to serious consequences in children. The very love of mothers for their children may bring on the children grave consequences. And when the mothers perceive such danger to the children it is their business to correct the faults. Usually they strive to make the corrections. Sometimes they strive wisely. At other times they strive unwisely, with great damage both to themselves and to the children.

Society is the mother of us all. Through mistaken indulgence Society leads us to develop faults of character. These faults of character often lead us to grave errors. Then Society tries to correct those errors. The means Society employs are sometimes far more severe than wise. They do far more harm than good. And even where Society, by the usual weapon of punishment, may correct or check or even destroy those errors, the cause of the errors remains. And the cause makes more errors. Even while Society is in the act of dealing with some of the more grave errors among her children, the cause

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is at work making more errors, perhaps as grave, perhaps graver.

Nevertheless, Society goes on punishing, just as the human mother does, just as devotedly, often less effectually. For Society has not the personal power of the human mother, the inexhaustible sympathy, the insight that goes with love, the divine patience, the untiring zeal, the hope that can conquer despair. Society is vast, impersonal, unsympathetic, in many ways blind. It strikes ruthlessly. It is so unfeeling that when it strikes one of its children it does not know that it strikes itself. In this regard, how plain is the difference between Society, mother of us all, and the human mother. For the human mother feels every blow she gives her child. Often she feels it far more keenly than the child can feel it. And she feels it long after the child has forgotten.

The mistakes that the human mother makes she nearly always finds out in time. But Society is slow in finding out. Society is only beginning to find out, after centuries of civilization. Society is slow to act. But perhaps it is well that Society is slow both to find out and to act. For the full realization would be terrible. If it came suddenly it might lead to direful consequences.

In a day Society might try to make up for all the iniquities imposed on the children through her mistakes. And in the change there would be such an upset that many more of the children would suffer. Perhaps it is enough that the realization has begun. For once begun it must go on until it becomes a complete realization and has expressed itself in justice.

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What a glorious time it will be when Society discovers that most of the punishment it inflicts ought not to have been inflicted on its children, but on itself.

Will Society then try to punish itself? Or will it know that the sincere realization of a wrong is in itself the end of the wrong? And will it know that the end of the wrong makes punishing unnecessary and wasteful? Besides, the end of the wrong will remove from the world the chief cause of all punishing. Perhaps it will do away with punishing altogether. For then Society will become the perfect mother. And the perfect mother has better things to do than punishing.

These things include the leading of her children into the path of virtue and of true happiness where punishing has no place, and where the children can live freely, joyously, developing their powers, exercising all their faculties.

## ON BEING GOOD

THE other day I heard a child lectured by his mother. She told him a great many things he had done that were wrong. When she finished he said: "Well, I don't see how I can remember all those things."

The mother tried not to smile. "Well, run along now," she said. "Just try to be good. Then you won't have to think about those things."

He scampered away, relieved and happy, as children always are on escaping from those high-minded moral talks.

I don't think the ordeal did him any good.

I have a notion that most of the ordeals that children are put through by grown-ups do no good. Often they do positive harm by making unwise parents think they are wise.

But the last words of that mother may have done me good. At any rate they set me thinking.

"Just try to be good. Then you won't have to think about those things."

There was the expression, however, "try to be good." I didn't like that.

Why all this trying? Is it such a hard state, being good? From the way most of us talk about it, one would think it was fearfully hard.

And yet, the wise men of the world tell us it is really the pleasantest state. They have spread abroad sayings which have become proverbs, signi-

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fying that goodness is one of the states of happiness. Perhaps it really is a hard state for children to reach and stay in. To appreciate it requires understanding and intelligence.

But the really good people I know don't seem to find being good at all hard. In fact, they don't seem to know they are good. They never talk about being good. With them goodness is simply a condition of being, apparently an unconscious condition. The people who talk so much about being good, I've noticed, are not really good. At any rate, they don't seem good to me. The fault, however, may be mine.

In fact, after hearing that child lectured by his mother, I was very much puzzled as to what the meaning was of "being good." And yet I felt sure I knew people who were good. I resolved to single out these people and to see if I could find what they had in common.

It was an interesting task. I had my hardest time in getting a group together. I was astonished by the number of people I couldn't get in. Not that any of them were bad, far from it. But so many people I should have supposed I could easily get in were barred out as soon as I applied to them the phrase, "being good."

That phrase suggested being in the state of goodness, you see, not absolute goodness, but in an easy and a considerate attitude toward the world and a comfortable and wholesome attitude toward themselves. Most of the people I knew were good at most times. But they could not be said to be in a permanent state of goodness. In most cases I

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could think of things that would suddenly, perhaps violently, throw them out of the state of goodness. At last, however, I got my group together.

"Now let us study this thing called 'being good,'" I said, surveying the group.

There they stood, calm, smiling, kind people, all unconscious of what I was doing to them. I could not help smiling myself, at their unconsciousness. I was amazed at what I believed to be the discovery of the most conspicuous quality those people had in common. What do you suppose it was? Not one of them took himself seriously. Perhaps that was why not one of them could be thought of as considering himself good. They were not only unconscious of being good. They were unconscious of themselves. They seemed to have forgotten all about themselves. They seemed also to be taking a smiling attitude toward life, humorous. They saw things in the right proportions. And they placed themselves in a right relation to their fellow-creatures. This relation made it easy for them to be good. And being good had simply become a habit. In this habit they were at ease. No wonder they could face life fearlessly, wholesomely, with humor.

I once received a dispirited letter from a lady who did not sign her name. She told of her struggles against adverse fortune and of her temptations. She had a husband who drank and got into debt. Life for her was evidently dull and full of hardship. She mentioned occasions when she had not merely resisted but had spurned temptation. Now

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she looked back on some of her temptations almost with regret and with the feeling that if they were to come again she might not be so quick to spurn or to resist. At the end, she said: "Am I good or am I bad?"

In response to that question I could only ask another: "Who am I, to judge?"

Goodness is one of the most inexplicable of all things. In this regard it resembles badness. Think how the world disagrees as to who are good and who are bad. Judging one another does not seem to be our business. At any rate, in judging, human beings have not thus far had much success.

In that lady's letter there is the expression of a very common attitude. It suggests that, at heart, people consider badness more attractive than goodness. They would be bad if they dared to be bad, or they think they would be bad if they dared to be bad.

The two things may seem to be the same. But they are very different.

Often we long to escape from our way of living, and to do things that are different from the things we do from day to day.

When we are in this state of mind the forbidden things present themselves in their most alluring aspects. The other aspects we forget for the time, or we deliberately ignore. So we are likely to think that if we had the chance to commit certain sins we should yield. But it doesn't at all follow that we should really yield.

The Bible tells us that the sins we commit in the heart are real sins and shall be recorded against

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us. We need not believe in our Bible, we need not profess any religious faith, to know that the saying is true. But the sins committed in the head may be no sins at all. They may be mere fancies, hardly more than shadows. It is only when we indulge the sins that they become part of us, only when we take them into the heart.

That lady who thinks she would like to do wrong might be astonished if the chance were to come. Through the habit of a lifetime she might find herself allied to forces beyond her conception, forces that safeguarded her, that gave her constant protection. For no one can walk in the straight path year after year, meeting trials, without developing moral energy. And in an emergency that energy may, of its own volition, start up and make a terrific fight.

We are all so much worse than we know ourselves to be—and so much better. We look out on the world and we see temptations that seem to call us irresistibly from the path we have long been treading and perhaps rebelliously treading. Sometimes we yield. And then we usually try to scramble back to the path. We see that, after all, everything considered, it was for us the most comfortable path. Sometimes, to our amazement, we see that it was the easiest path. When we get back we are more or less damaged. But it is with relief that we take the trail again.

On the other hand; sometimes we don't yield to the seemingly irresistible call. And sometimes we discover that we could not possibly yield under any

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circumstances. All the years we have lived are resisting and are far more powerful than we are ourselves.

The truth is, of course, that we are ourselves all our years.

What seems to me most significant is that there is such a widespread desire to keep to the trail. And this desire convinces me that most people in their hearts wish to be good. Where there is so much wishing the sight of so much failing becomes pathetic.

On the other hand, there are those who seem to be born to the trail. They follow it unfalteringly. They, apparently, never have the least desire to stray. They can no more change their character than they can change the color of their skin. Perhaps the secret is that they don't accomplish anything. They simply fulfil the law of their being.

Surely they don't deserve any credit. It is enough for them to be just what they are. Why should they, already so blessed, receive more rewards?

The best we can do is to strive to learn their secret.

But perhaps they can't tell it themselves. Perhaps they don't know.

There are people that know about themselves. They are the people who are not born good and who struggle, desperately and often unsuccessfully, to achieve goodness. They can tell awful things. And some of those things reflect shamefully on some of the other people, the people who don't have to struggle and who are considered good.

When the bad people become good they perform

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a wonderful feat. But the world seldom understands. It often reminds those people that they were once bad.

The world does things to those once bad that seem designed for the express purpose of making them bad again. Sometimes it does make them bad.

And the bad people who struggle to be good are forced back into evil and become a menace to society.

How do they seem to God?

Is it not possible that to the eye of divine mercy in their very defeat there may be victory?

## LONELINESS

ONE of the happiest women that I know is a domestic worker. She is very intelligent. Years of quiet observation, of reading, and of thinking have enriched her mind. She dislikes hurry, noise, confusion and excitement. She has created a little world for herself and there she goes her way, doing her work easily and efficiently. And yet she does not love her work. She knows that it gets little credit in spite of its being so necessary and important. She realizes that the world gives it slight esteem. Perhaps for this reason she retires within herself the more deeply. She possesses, however, the supreme wisdom of knowing how to keep her spirit undisturbed. It enables her to be at peace with herself. One result is that she is never lonely. She passes days, sometimes weeks at a time, alone. Keeping the house in order gives her plenty of work to do and she enjoys doing it without interference of any kind. Indeed, such periods she considers specially agreeable. When her friends ask her if she is not lonely, she laughs like a child. The truth is that, through being alone so much, she has learned never to be alone. She has the diversion of healthy activity, of cheerful thoughts, of a happy relation with a multitude of healthy influences from outside and of springs from within.

Loneliness is one of the bugbears of mankind. With some people, it is a constant source of unhappiness. They make plans, sometimes exceedingly

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complex, to keep it at bay. They think that it lies outside. It really lies within their own consciousness.

Many of the loneliest people in the world have plenty of company. Their lives are full of social activity. They are always doing. Sometimes they are like hunted creatures. The hunted look one can often see in their eyes. They would be astonished, perhaps resentful, if they were told that they were themselves the hunters. Sometimes they blame the people about them. Sometimes they blame the conditions of life. Themselves they never blame. With longing, they look out on the world as if seeking for someone to give help. They even become reproachful and say there is no one with sympathy for them or understanding. And yet help is always with them, waiting for a chance, in the inner consciousness.

A well-to-do woman of my acquaintance dreads being alone. When she cannot find anyone else to talk with, of an evening, she calls up her old Irish cook from the kitchen. Then the two meet on terms of something like equality. They cease to be merely mistress and maid. They share their human sympathy, usually in the form of personal gossip. Of the two, the mistress enjoys the talk by far the more. It is she who is lonely. It is the cook that is kind.

The people who like to be alone are usually of superior character, but not always. The mountain folk, in spite of years of association with the nobler and the more rugged aspects of nature, may be exceedingly selfish and disagreeable and morose.

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They have learned to love their privacy so much that they may be irritated or completely upset by the least intrusion. They may show that they have developed a great many eccentricities and capacities for resentment, that they have become morally angular. To be superior to loneliness may not, under some conditions, in itself, be a virtue. On the contrary, it may betray profound weaknesses of character. It may suggest the presence of qualities, if not in themselves vicious, at any rate so lacking in adaptability as to be anti-social.

The ideal attitude is to be able to live in a way that, no matter what the conditions may be, loneliness is impossible. The mountain-dwellers, suddenly thrown into a great city, would become wretched victims of loneliness. They would long for solitude just as other kinds of lonely people long for company. Without their mountains, without the association that helped to establish their habits, they would feel themselves indeed helpless and alone. The people in the streets are alien, irritating. The huddled buildings are an ache. The noise is a torment. The loss of the familiar they may find so intolerable as to drive them precipitately back.

All lonely people suffer from unfamiliarity. Though they may love crowds, unfamiliar crowds may cause them distress. Travelers who are not born travelers and who develop no real liking for travel, through hating to be alone, often find their acutest suffering when walking through the streets of a foreign city, listening to an alien language, seeing alien faces and observing alien ways.

## LONELINESS

Is it really possible to avoid loneliness, or to keep it in control? Surely. The matter is wholly personal. The way to begin is, oddly enough, by learning how to be impersonal, to stop the eternal concern for oneself, in caring more and more for the things of interest outside. For loneliness, though it may seem unselfish, is really a kind of selfishness. It is emphasis of self even while being a depreciation of self. If the lonely people would only stop thinking about themselves they would cease to be lonely.

One trouble with most of us is that we don't use the resources within ourselves. We are all neglectful of powers that we share as our human birth-right, capacities for distraction from ourselves, for intelligent enjoyment, for receiving and giving. Through lack of mental and moral and spiritual exercises our souls shrink and shrivel and break out into maladies that almost inevitably include the feeling of misery and isolation usually described as loneliness. If we were properly related to ourselves and to the world and to the universe we should never lack for company and we should never be lonely.

## THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE

ONE day, with a visiting Englishman, a man interested in the study of social conditions, I went to a baseball game on the East Side of New York. The two nines were composed of East Side boys, some of them rather tough-looking.

It was interesting to see them play. They entered into the work with enthusiasm. And toward one another they showed a fine spirit.

The Englishman was very much impressed. "Those are very remarkable boys," he said. Then, with that peculiar upward inflection to our ears so amusing, he asked: "Are they typical?"

I replied that I thought they represented the average among the boys in the district.

"And what will they amount to? Will they grow up to be useful citizens? There's certainly plenty of ability and character here. It's quite remarkable."

"Some of them will grow up to be useful citizens," I replied. "But they will all be hampered by lack of education. Nearly all of these boys, though there are none of them more than fifteen, left school long ago and are working for their living. Saturday afternoon is their only play time. However, some of them will do fairly well."

You see, I was really dodging the question.

I suspect that the Englishman was shrewd enough to perceive I was dodging. He came at me again:

"How about the others?"

## THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE

"Well, some of the others will drift."

"H'm!" said the Englishman.

For a few moments he was seemingly absorbed in the game. But I noticed that he was studying the faces of those boys with his sharp eyes.

"What happens to them when they drift?" he suddenly asked.

"Sometimes for weeks at a time they have no work to do. Then they get out of the habit of working. Some of them begin to drink. Some of them become politicians and help to corrupt the city government. Some of them contract disease. Some of them steal or commit other crimes and land in prison."

The Englishman was shaking his head. "What a waste!" he remarked, as if speaking to himself.

I suppose the worst result of our economic system is the waste. I don't mean the material waste. I mean the waste in human possibilities.

That was an interesting illustration given by John D. Rockefeller, Jr., some time ago while he was talking to his Bible class. He was explaining about the culture of the American Beauty rose, and he said that to bring the rose to its present exquisite perfection thousands of buds had to be sacrificed.

Since reading about that illustration I have thought of it so often in seeing beautiful young girls, daughters of wealth, exquisitely dressed and riding in finely appointed automobiles.

I have wondered how many thousands of young boys, like those boys I used to see in the East Side of New York, had to be sacrificed in order to produce those exquisite creatures, and how many thousands of young girls, sisters of those boys.

## THE HOPE OF THE FUTURE

Roses are such beautiful things. We all love them, and we recognize that they have a wonderfully refining influence in life. There are kind women who distribute roses among prisoners in order to soften those hard hearts. Indeed, flowers of all kinds exert a beautiful influence.

Those flowers of the race that we see in automobiles, those exquisite young girls, doubtless exercise a good influence if their minds and hearts are cultivated with anything like the care given to their bodies and their personal appearance.

And yet it is terrible to think of the thousands, yes, the millions, of human buds that are cut down or allowed to wither, when with care they might be made into flowers of the race.

Will the time ever come when we shall appreciate the possibilities in human beings? Shall we see that to produce one fine human being, as rare as an American Beauty rose, it is not necessary to sacrifice other human beings?

In this regard, there is far more economy in the development of fine human beings than in the development of American Beauty roses.

Perhaps the very folly of our present course will appeal to us on the practical side. When our eyes are opened we shall see that we cannot afford to waste human possibilities as we are wasting them now. When we see the marvelous powers in the children of the poor, their natural instinct for what is good, their extraordinary capacity for development, perhaps we shall devote ourselves might and main to bring out these powers and to save those powers for the benefit of the race.

## HATING

THERE was a literary man that I used to walk along the street with. He had a large number of acquaintances. Often, apparently for no reason, he would become excited and he would frown and turn his head away. For a few moments there would be silence. Then he would speak with bitterness of someone we had just passed, someone he hated and refused to speak to. In every instance he would tell me something discreditable about the person, something that made it impossible for him to keep his peace of mind. In most of those instances he had known the people very well and, as a result of their misbehavior, he had cast them off. The sight of them seemed to arouse in him a flood of bitter memories. Sometimes he would tell me how much he hated this person or that. Once I ventured to say to him: "Don't you find it very uncomfortable to hate so many people?" He looked at me with surprise and resentment. "Of course I don't," he said. Then he went on with noble indignation: "Do you suppose that I am going to have anything to do with people I despise? There are plenty of decent people in the world and I prefer to know them." I did not pursue the inquiry. But I wondered why he did not stop to consider the distressing effect of his hating on himself.

Hating is always distressing. And yet so many of us hate bitterly. We often boast of being good haters. It is as if we were to boast of being good dipsomaniacs, or good drug fiends, or good disturbers of our own peace. Indeed, hating is so painful

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that it may reach a point where even the haters see its folly and, for the sake of protecting themselves, take measures either to modify or to stop their hating. "I got into such a state of mind over that thing," said a friend to me the other day, after telling of an unpleasant complication that he had been involved in with a business partner, "that I found I was making myself sick. I was ready to do my partner personal violence. So I decided to put the whole thing out of mind. It was easier to let myself be done up in that particular transaction than to go on nursing that miserable feeling. Besides, I saw that my partner was feeling just about as bitter as I felt myself." Here, it seemed to me, was a particularly interesting situation. "How did your partner feel after you called the thing off?" My friend smiled. "Well, though he'd refused to budge an inch before, he came off his perch and offered to make a compromise. So the whole thing straightened itself out."

Shortly after I published a little fictional study designed to show the workings of hate on the mind and on the body a reader said to me: "I have a case of hate of my own that I'd like to see what you think of." Then he told me of a gross injustice he had been subjected to, a distressing experience that had broken out into many irritations and trials and that promised to continue the torment. "Do you wonder that I hate that man?" he asked, referring to the cause of the trouble. I certainly didn't wonder. Under such circumstances, hating seemed to me the most natural reaction in the world. "I've got so now that I enjoy hating him," he went on. "The more I hate him the more I enjoy hating

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him." As he spoke the expression in his face was painful to see. It was as if he were taking a strange, distressful pleasure in prodding at an aching tooth or at sore gums. What he really enjoyed was giving himself relief from his hating by consciously expressing it in his thoughts and in his words. "But, of course, I know," he said, "that hating doesn't do any good to me. It does me harm. It makes me suffer. So I have to stand two things through that fellow—the thing that he did to me and the hating." It seemed to me that he was working his case out pretty well. "Of the two things, which is worse?" I asked. Without a moment's hesitation he replied: "Oh, the hating." And yet it was the hating that he could deal with, that he could, if he chose, end.

The moment we begin hating we start a train of mischief. Instantly the person we hate becomes a painful object, not to the physical eye alone, but to the eye of consciousness which can see objects far away or not present at all. The good haters carry about with them many such objects. They fill their house of life with hideous furniture. Life itself they make ugly. And the ugliness they reflect in their feeling, often in their looks. The good haters easily assume hateful expressions. And hateful expressions sometimes become fixed in the face. Indeed, all the beauty doctors in the world cannot hide such betrayals. Furthermore, hating quickly shows itself to the object hated. If the object hated is human it is likely to return hate for hate. Now the war is on. There is no knowing how far it will go, with its reprisals. Invariably hating brings out the worst aspects in the hater and in the hated.

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Hating is wasteful and absurd. But there are people we can't get along with, hateful people, perhaps people that hate us for no reason in the world or people that annoy us or draw us into quarreling. Isn't it better for us to keep out of the way? Often we find people taking this line of thought. As a rule it is self-deceptive. Surely it is better for us to keep out of the way of those we can't get along with. But when we meet them there is only one thing for us to do, to treat them courteously, to be careful not to let them see that we are suspicious of them or in any way unfriendly. We must actually take toward them a kindly attitude. We must realize that their faults belong to the huge family of faults from which we ourselves make a generous draft.

In all our hating there is a vast amount of egotism. If we could forget ourselves we should instantly forget our hating. We know of people who have done others injustice and who are consequently hated by those people. But we don't necessarily hate them or feel any resentment. It is only when the injury becomes our injury that we subject ourselves to torment. For this reason alone we ought to see what a small personal thing hate is and what an unwise indulgence. Nearly everyone has some special hate. So nearly everyone has some special task to meet in life, to overcome this foe that lives in the consciousness. To reach victory here may mean a marvelous increase in happiness. Surely then it is worth struggling for. And when the victory is won there is just one thing for each of us to do, to part company with hate for the rest of our lives.

## GETTING ON WITH PEOPLE

**T**HREE is a fierce bulldog that lives in our street. He is considered a great beauty. I suppose that if my eyes were better trained to the understanding of dogs I should be able to perceive and to enjoy his aesthetic points. For in relation to dogs, as well as to human beings, beauty is largely in the eye of the beholder.

To my untrained eye this particular dog is a monster of ugliness. He is built low, with short, curved legs, and he has the ugliest face imaginable, with a protruding jaw, indicating a character of fierce and unsympathetic determination, and with parted lips that reveal three gleaming white and dangerously sharp teeth.

Strangers meeting this dog often shrink away. Then he begins to growl. At the sound of his growling the strangers are apt to move more rapidly. The growling increases. Occasionally there are signs of pursuit. Yesterday I saw him dart viciously at a pair of high-heeled shoes, rapidly moving up the street.

I have never known him actually to bite any one. And yet I have often seen him reach the point where biting seemed the next inevitable step.

In the presence of his master and of the friends of his master there is an amazing change in that dog. He becomes gentle, docile, affectionate. He plays with the children of his master, and allows them to roll him on the floor and to maul him. At such times the expression of his mouth actually suggests laughter.

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Occasionally he misbehaves and get a scolding. Then he slinks into a corner and grieves. As a rule, those who scold him feel so sorry that they have to relent. They go up and pat him affectionately on the back. Then he jumps on them, his jaws opening into one of those big smiles, his tail wagging, his whole being expressing love and joy.

Now the dog who scares strangers, who at the least sign of fear or provocation shows the desire to fight, is the same dog who, with those he loves and those who love him, reveals himself as the most submissive and the tenderest of animals.

Human beings are exactly like that dog. When we find that people mistrust us, or antagonize us, we instantly reveal the worst in our natures, unless there is some reason for putting a strong restraint upon ourselves.

And even where we do put a restraint upon ourselves, resentment in us asserts itself and creates evil feelings and evil thoughts. We all know people who make us appear at our worst. Instinctively we dislike them. Sometimes we openly resent them and inflict punishment. And the more we punish them and the more we resent, the greater seems their power to bring out the evil in us.

We all have such people in our consciousness. Unless we are very forgiving and generous, every time we think of them we feel uncomfortable, perhaps bitter. Sometimes we wonder why such people can treat us so contemptibly. But we seldom ask ourselves if, in the consciousness of others, we can be included among such ill-behaved people.

I know a very able man who is continually finding himself involved in quarrels. Occasionally he

## GETTING ON WITH PEOPLE

tells me about the infamous way in which various people have treated him. In nearly every instance I am persuaded that he has a grievance. The things that the people have said and have done are certainly reprehensible. But in his complaints he leaves out one consideration, the simple fact that he takes toward most of the world an antagonistic attitude. Resolutely, he stands for what he believes to be justice. And he finds, as every one of us finds, that in our human relations it is not enough for us to be just or to stand for justice.

Fine as justice is, as an every day quality, it is not winning. It is lacking in warmth. We need something better. We need sympathy with the other fellow and kindness.

My friend, by constantly asserting what he believes to be his just ideas, creates in many of those about him an antagonism which opens the door to misunderstanding and resentment.

There is another man of my acquaintance who is also a friend of this just man. He is not merely just, he is generous. He is constantly giving way to other people in the small things of life, always making ready concessions.

It is interesting and amusing to see those two men together. My severely just friend actually glows in the presence of the other. He becomes not merely sympathetic and generous, but fairly prodigal in his desire to concede.

Naturally, the two get on together. My just friend is always praising our common friend as "fair." He does not realize that the very best in his own nature is brought out, not by fairness, but

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by qualities that go far beyond anything like mere justice.

And yet I may be mistaken here. Perhaps he does realize. Perhaps he identifies the best in his nature with his real self. And in this identification he may be perfectly right.

Everybody, no matter how hateful he may be, no matter how deeply and widely hated, loves someone and is loved by someone. In the presence of that other he shows his best self. And to the other that best self is the real self.

We all find a good deal of comfort in thinking of our best selves. If we thought very much about our worst selves we should be pretty miserable. Such thinking as we do about "worst selves" is usually about the worst selves of other people. And our consciousness of the worst selves of other people usually corresponds with our power to bring out those worst selves.

The people who get on best with the rest of the world are usually those who are least conscious of the evil in human beings about them and who are most conscious of the best selves of others.

Once, in an article, I compared human character to a mesh of string. The other day, in looking over a volume of Shakespeare, I found that the comparison was old. Many centuries before Shakespeare it must have been made.

Everyone of us is like a mesh of string. And among all the many strings in that mesh there is somewhere hidden a yellow piece. It may be a long piece or a short piece. But it is there. And every one of us is likely to know it is there. And

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every one of us tries to hide it from those we love and whose love we prize.

Now and then some one comes along and sees in the mesh that yellow streak. And in seeing it he is likely to identify the whole mesh, that is, the whole character, with yellow.

And if he lets us know that he believes we are all yellow, we are likely to become yellow, at any rate, so far as that particular observer is concerned. We are likely to act toward him as if we really were yellow.

So it behooves us to be careful in seeing. If we must be sharp, if we must see that yellow streak, let us be careful not to let it blind us to the other colors.

## SILENCE

ONE day a few years ago some residents in New York City, within reach of the roar of Broadway, received a violent shock: silence seemed to fill the world, suddenly, mysteriously. It terrified them. They felt as if they were about to meet a calamity. The women began to ask hysterically what was happening. The faces of the men grew pale. The tension became almost unbearable. In another moment some of the women might scream. Then it was found that a great man was about to be buried. All the traffic in the city had been suspended.

Poor children, used to the complicated street life of New York, often suffer when they pass a few days in the country. Some of them are depressed by the silence. Others say that they can't sleep because of the noise, the chirping of the crickets, the croaking of the frogs, and all the other country sounds.

They are used to another kind of turbulence. It is their habit. It becomes like silence. It is as if it were not outside them, but were a part of their consciousness. The sharp sounds coming out of the stillness may pierce consciousness like pain.

You must often have heard a clock suddenly stop in a quiet room. The effect is uncanny.

Few people can endure silence for long. They must have some expression outside themselves that corresponds to the unrest of the spirit.

## SILENCE

And it is only after we know each other well and trust each other that two of us can sit together silently and happily.

There are unfortunates who never realize the beauty of silence, the restless ones. Wherever they are they destroy it. They chronically feel an incessant desire to fill up all the crevices of time with sound.

They contribute to the vast sum of disease in the world. They are themselves diseased. They lack one of the most precious blessings of health, balance of qualities that give poise, expressing itself in love of peace, in silence.

Some natures, on the other hand, are always silent. Even when they speak they make an effect of silence. They do things quietly, efficiently. They are never in a hurry, even when they move rapidly. We all know them. They radiate strength and wholesomeness. They seem always to be open to the invigorating air and sunshine. They are like the earth, gratefully drinking from the life-giving fountains. They are fertile with springs of kind feeling, with beautiful silent impulses.

Sometimes you will find such natures in the most unexpected places. Occasionally you will catch glimpses of them in passing. The other night I saw one as I was riding home in the street car, crowded with tired, irritated, uncomfortable people, released from their work into the pouring rain. And packed in as they were, the conductor had to make his way through them and collect the fares.

You know how some conductors act under similar circumstances, how they push, and fret, and complain, and, to the general irritation, add resentment.

## SILENCE

But this conductor did nothing of the kind. He went at his task easily, quietly and yet resolutely, without being in the least aggressive. Though he did not smile, he looked pleasant. He controlled the situation without saying a word. His cheerful silence, supported by his strength, made everyone in that car feel more comfortable. If I were an employer of men, with a big business, I would find that conductor and offer him a position. He would be worth many times his salary as conductor.

We find the same quality illustrated among animals. Have you ever noticed those dogs that manage sheep? Some of the dogs are nervous and ugly. They irritate the sheep. They administer their rebukes in ugly sounds and in vicious bites. Others of the dogs never show ugliness or nervousness. They never bite the sheep. They are always running along the edge of the flock, wagging their tails and showing in their faces and in their open mouths, tongues out, unmistakable good humor. They seem to be having a good time. Even when they bark there is something pleasant about the sound. But usually they are silent, pleasantly silent, like the wonderful silent people.

There are situations where to be silent is to seem untruthful. For the lovers of truth they are hard to meet. But on occasion they must be met without fear. Our speaking out may do mischief. It may cause us to say something damaging to another. Shall we sacrifice him or shall we sacrifice our own feelings? Surely, in the choice, there can be no hesitation. Everyone of us is occasionally called upon to be silent about something associated

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with another. If we speak there is not only inevitable loss for the other, but loss for one's self, in kindness and in self-control. The oftener we meet this situation the stronger we grow, the more closely we become identified with the courage and the consideration and the beauty that go with silence. Perhaps, by chance, we have become aware of something discreditable in the life of another. Opportunity after opportunity comes to us inviting us to betray. If we resist it we shall feel better. We shall have the sense of stopping a train of evil. If we yield we shall know that we have sent that train on, perhaps to do an incalculable amount of harm, perhaps, besides, to involve ourselves in distressing complications.

There are so many things in life that we ought to be silent about. Nearly always they are unpleasant. Our silence tends to minimize them, often to destroy them altogether. By speaking of them, we give them renewed life and activity. If every one of us could only take the unpleasant as it enters consciousness and let it perish there, what a burden would be lifted off the world. In this good work we can all be active. It is worth anyone's endeavor. It may justify a life in all other respects a failure. At the end of each day it ought to be a comfort to every one of us to be able to think that we have not added to the sum of ill-feeling, either in ourselves or in others. So often, in this regard, we are violators. Just a little care will keep us in check. Someone comes along and drops a critical or an ill-natured remark about another. Shall we carry it on or shall we keep silent? If we keep silent it disappears in the air. There are those who seem to think it is a

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joke to report that this person has made an ill-natured comment about that other person or that that other person dislikes this person. There are even those who are cruel enough to tell others that the others are disliked by certain people or have been criticised. With appalling frankness they quote and give names. They make a huge contribution to ill-feeling. Often they start resentments that lead to dreadful consequences, destroying friendship, inciting far-reaching retaliation. They have no conception of the wonder and of the rewards of silence.

To enjoy silence is a rare faculty. There are those who scarcely know what it means. They live in a world of reverberation. Even when they are alone their consciousness is noisy. If we had eyes fine enough to look in and to see what was going on we should find that they were always in a turmoil. They usually have a way of putting their idlest thoughts into words. To live with them may be a great trial. They trivialize life. They spread about them an atmosphere of fatigue. Their thinking is always on the surface, where they habitually live. The truth is that they have no time to do any real thinking. They never familiarize themselves with silence, where the real thinking is done, the thinking that goes down to the depths. As a rule, they cannot bear to be alone. No wonder. They have only the company of their strident thoughts clamoring to wear themselves out in words. The lovers of silence, knowing the futility of words, are never without companionship. In the place where silence lives there are the still voices. "Silence is the mother of truth," said Disraeli.

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To have command of silence is to secure a rich possession, like an independent estate. Happiest are those who can enjoy silence for long stretches. When they are mentally tired or depressed they can go into their silence and find refreshment. For days at a time they can be by themselves and rest. They can leave the turbulent city and escape into the country and abandon themselves to the wholesome influences of nature. They are not at the mercy of the need for companionship, the slaves of others. If we all knew how to be silent, deeply, wholesomely silent, we should have a panacea.

Then there are those trying moments when, under stress of excitement, perhaps of resentment, we are tempted to use ill-considered words. If we have command of silence we may protect ourselves from irreparable harm. The least said being soonest mended, if nothing is said at all there may be a complete avoidance of damage. But, of course, even silence may be abused. There are occasions when it may create ill-feeling. Even then, however, the forces behind it may be of help, warning us, if we must speak, to know what to avoid saying.

In controversy the silent people have a great advantage. They know how confusing and irritating the talk is likely to be. They reply only to the essential, provided of course they have to reply at all. They develop a genius for avoiding the unessential, which includes the recriminating and the irritating.

Of late I have been reading the essay on "Silence" by Maeterlinck. It is one of his most

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beautiful essays. In spite of making several quotations from that eminently practical philosopher, Carlyle, he deals with the subject somewhat fantastically. Occasionally he gives the impression that he is talking as much for sound as for truth; but he says many convincing things. Everyone who thinks about the wonderful meaning of silence ought to read this essay. Perhaps the most suggestive remark in it is the quotation from the one Maeterlinck says he holds most dear, evidently the woman who is now his wife, "We do not know each other yet. We have not yet dared to be silent together."

What a hard test the test of silence may sometimes be! Usually we have to know people very well to be able to endure being with them in silence. Often it is a long time before we even venture to take the risk. The silence of a few moments only may cause us distress.

And yet we may occasionally meet someone that on first acquaintance we find ourselves at ease with. It is as if a kind of harmony were instantly established between us.

When two people understand each other, what wonderful things they can convey in silence. I know a man who takes long walks through the country with a friend. For a stretch of many miles they will not speak. In that silent companionship they find one of the greatest pleasures of companionship.

On the other hand, as Maeterlinck so beautifully points out, there are silences, perhaps between those who are closely united, which seem to open the door for subtle resentments and enmities.

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Some people never learn to appreciate the beauty of silence. Perhaps it is an appreciation that cannot be acquired. Perhaps it comes by nature. Such people seem to believe that all apparently human relations must express themselves in speech. They keep up an incessant chatter and they try to make others chatter in return. They are among the most fatiguing influences in the world. Often they are tormented with personal curiosity. They ask searching questions, and if they do not receive spontaneous and full replies they become suspicious or hurt.

There are people who are never silent even when they are alone. Sometimes they actually speak aloud to themselves. Even when they don't speak aloud their minds are in a turmoil.

Indeed, there are very few who can achieve perfect silence with themselves. For silence is essentially a quality of the spirit. And rare is the human creature capable of maintaining the spirit that at will can command and enjoy silence.

Why is it that so many of us cannot endure being alone? Is it not because we have no silence within us, because we have allowed the mind to become like a battlefield?

Here may be the real secret of silence. It may lie in the quality of impression that we receive in our consciousness. If we allow ourselves to be impressed by ugly things, by thoughts of strife and bitterness and hate, there is no silence for us. But if we receive only impressions of beauty and love, then we need never be afraid. In ourselves we shall find the companionship of peace. We shall be constantly solaced with silence.

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There is another wonderful attribute of silence: it persists even in the presence of turmoil.

Haven't you seen the silent people surrounded with strife, and haven't you noticed how untroubled they have been, how serene? They are the masters of silence. They are themselves silence. It is in the presence of such people throughout the world, here and there, in the most unexpected places, known only to the few about them, that Carlyle finds the security of our institutions, the hope of the future.

It is curious how instinctively most of us react from our experiences into words. Something happens to us and instantly we talk about it. We see or hear something of interest and we long to tell it. This instinct grows stronger and stronger with habit.

But, if we are wise, we can perceive early in life that it is an instinct leading to perils. We find that there are moments when we must resist. If we don't we may do mischief, either to others or to ourselves, perhaps to both. Fortunate are they who have the strength to resist and the will to create a second habit which, in time, may become like an instinct, warning when to be silent.

Often silence is a powerful weapon. If we only knew how valiantly it could serve us in defense we should use it more. Under abuse or attack it may be the sign of guilt; but it may also be a proof of innocence and an unmistakable evidence of nobility.

On the other hand, silent anger is the most terrible of all anger. It suggests a force under control which, if let loose, would be overwhelming.

There are some people, and the fault is more feminine than masculine, who have what seems to be

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an instinctive desire to destroy reserve. They may or may not have reserves of their own. Usually they have not. They long to enter the consciousness of others, to break and enter if they cannot secure admittance by any other means, and to explore all the rooms there, all the corridors and crannies. Such people the sensitive are quick to recognize and to guard against. The reserves become fortifications and, as a rule, the assaults are vain.

It is the silent people who most easily enter the consciousness of others, the unintrusive, the unassertive and quietly sympathetic. By having no curiosity, they free those about them from self-consciousness, which is so largely self-concern. They give freedom for expansion and expression. With them the sensitive can secure, not only escape from pain, but genuine solace. The diffident can find voices. The sufferers can receive comfort.

It is wonderful, the power of the silent people. Even the animals feel it and respond. Often by their very presence they can create an atmosphere of calm, of ease, of spiritual uplift. In a very real sense they are the inspirers of the world, the strengthening presences.

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**W**HEN we find ourselves causing people to show their worst side in our presence we may be fairly certain that something is wrong with us. Suppose the qualities displayed are indisputably bad. There are people who don't bring them out. In the presence of those others, indeed, the qualities apparently go into hiding. Why should they come forward and assert themselves in our presence? The mere approach of a person often has the effect of putting into action the bad qualities of others. Among children there are conspicuous examples. In school one teacher will find a child intolerable. Another teacher may find the same child likable.

Often, it is true, bad qualities hide themselves from motives of policy. And often they express themselves before us without any cause that we can be associated with. The most winning people in the world, the most fortunate in disposition, may have distressing experiences of this kind. But with them the experiences are unusual. They do not repeat themselves day after day, as happens with so many of us. When we find humanity churlish or resentful or mocking, the chances are that, no matter how much we may dislike such expressions and the feeling behind them, we, nevertheless, by our attitude, betraying itself subtly, perhaps almost imperceptibly, are in active co-operation with the spirit of ill-will.

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What do the exceptional people resort to for protection under inharmonious conditions? They surely must have something to teach us. If we study them carefully we shall find that they simply remain themselves. They go on being good-humored. They achieve wonderful results, like miracles. Their good humor can exorcise ill-will. They have a way of keeping themselves beyond the reach of harm. A friendly smile or a gentle word in response to unkindness may make further unkindness from the same source impossible. Most of us, as soon as we have a grievance, or what we believe to be a grievance, take it into our consciousness and nurse it. We not only keep it alive in the heat of resentment but we actually make it grow. And the more it grows the more painful it becomes and the stronger in its insistence on reprisal. As we all know, the consequences may be cumulative, leading to evils absurdly out of proportion to the first cause. To have the power to ignore and to forget a cause of resentment, either imaginary or real, is to possess the attribute of a god, maker of heaven. And to have the power to let no cause of resentment pass and to make up causes from our own sensitiveness, is to possess the attributes of a devil, maker of hell.

It is in the small conflicts of personality that most of us find some of our hardest trials. The trouble obviously comes from ourselves. We are too unyielding. We go through the day like iron bars. The people that meet us feel themselves striking against a hard surface. If we were to make ourselves more pliant we should find that they would become more pliant, too. Life, difficult before,

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would be much easier. The inexorable way would reveal itself in all its cruelty, to others and to ourselves. The paths of the inexorable people are strewn with disasters. And those disasters, remember, do not remain behind. The people mowed down do not remain prostrate. They get up, and after feeling their bruises, they pursue, often with bitter hostility. The inexorable act committed five years ago may translate itself into the torment of today.

The most successful man that I know in meeting the conflicts of personality often says, in his quiet way, "I don't like to ask people to do things they don't want to do." To the casual observer the remark may seem like the expression of weakness. It is really an expression of power. For this man the conflicts of personality seem hardly to be conflicts. Those that may be described by this word occur to him seldom. It is only the extremely exacting or selfish or arrogant that can draw him into anything approximating a conflict. His contacts are all friendly. He performs one of the most beautiful miracles of personality, by making those in his presence seem to become like himself. It is as if, quite unconsciously, he had set up before them an ideal of conduct, as if he himself showed how fine it was and how much better than any other possible ideal. To show in his presence those ugly qualities that lie in personality would be almost impossible. To be angry in his presence, for example, would be a kind of feat. No wonder he finds life worth living. For him every day is full of sunshine. It is not his own sunshine, either. In large measure it comes from the sunshine that lies in the

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hearts of the people about him, before some people seldom drawn out and before him pouring abundantly.

We all know people of this kind, perhaps, from the point of view of the world, quite unimportant, women and men in humble circumstances, ignorant, even illiterate, but with a voice within singing a song that is worth a thousand times more than the wisdom of the most accomplished. By some benevolence they have been so made that they can turn on life exactly the right view, that they can take exactly the right attitude. Each day they give out and they draw in treasures far beyond the wealth of a Rockefeller. Their lives are radiant. They go happily through the day. They brighten up, if for a moment only, every one they meet. Through those contacts they themselves grow brighter. Surely there is magic here. It is worth our while to study its workings and to reflect on its meaning and try to catch its secret.

## OUR SENSES

**W**HAT confidence we have in our senses. And yet we know that we are often deceived. Experience keeps telling us that sense-perception is merely relative. All about us there must be forces at work that our senses are not aware of. For example, this morning, as I was walking over the hills, I saw a dog eagerly sniffing. Through the sense of smell he was evidently receiving a multitude of suggestions, to me denied. Close as we were, we lived in worlds far apart. His world fairly seethed with adventure, opened up to him through his fine perception. But for his presence, I should have been unaware of its existence.

We all realize the unreliability of hearing. We are likely to be slow in locating the direction of certain sounds. Now they may seem to come from one direction and now from another. The saying, common among us, that our senses have deceived us applies with particular force to this sense. There are those whose hearing is marvelously acute. Sometimes we say that they have sharp ears. But hearing is by no means related to the ears alone, as, after brief reflection, we shall agree. It is, somehow, related to our whole being. There are sounds that apparently enter through every pore, even between the pores, that invade us from outside and from every side, like a flood.

The teeth, closely related to the ears, deaf people have found great aids to hearing. Perhaps there is

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no part of the body that is unrelated to this sense. And then we know people who can hear sounds from a distance so phenomenal that it would seem as if the sounds must reach by some supernatural power. Often those highly developed psychically will receive messages of distress, like cries, from those dear to them in other parts of the world. In such cases we are inclined to think that the message comes, not by hearing, not by means of the ear, but by a power that transcends sense and that is related to the mind or to the soul or to both. Is it not possible that such instances carry the promise of a closer relation between human beings, of a bond that shall annihilate space?

Hearing obviously is related to feeling. So indeed are all the senses. Tasting and smelling at once create feeling. Seeing and hearing may seem slower in their effect on feeling in some instances. Now we can understand what certain philosophers mean when they say that all the sensations of life are related to touch, which is, of course, feeling. But by touch is meant something far more subtle and profound than mere physical contact. Perhaps the truth is that all life is intimately related, that is, all life is in touch. If we could only escape from the limitations of the senses we might find that they were mere clues to universal harmony, distant, vague hints.

And as for seeing, marvelous as sight is, how much it, too, must miss. Even among people there is a startling difference. It exists not merely in its relation to space. Those who see farthest may really see very little, and those who are short-sighted

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may see a million things denied to the others. What a reproach to our eyes the microscope is and how it suggests the marvels that even with its aid we cannot see. Sight, indeed, seems so closely related to the mind as to be more than sense. But the most gifted human beings in the way of sight, those we call seers, those who see not merely things but the meaning of things, and who see things denied to our sight and meaning closed to our understanding, realize that there are greater marvels still beyond their reach.

Today I have had a commonplace illustration. An able man, associated with a great personage, has been telling me stories about the personage, about his simplicity, his sympathy, his wisdom, all intimate little expressions, full of character. These stories I should like to put into print. But I must not. The man would feel that I had betrayed both his confidence in me and the confidence given him by the personage. So I have been trying to think of someone who could give me virtually the same account without violating confidence. But where shall I find another with a similar power of appreciation, with the same capacity to see? It is not merely that the personage is great. My informant had to possess a greatness of his own to reach those fine and searching perceptions.

Similarly, if our eyes were not so limited, we should see that there was no such thing in the world as an individual. We should become really alive to the truth we now perceive so dimly, that we were all related. Our special advantage we should discover to be involved in the universal ad-

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vantage. We should see the body politic as a single thing, an organism, as definite and as distinct as a human body, the ill health of one part related to the condition of the whole system, sending poison through the veins. How alert we should be to give treatment and to save ourselves, ourselves really being all the others, too.

However, we surely ought not to be pessimistic. If we can't see we can reason. Perhaps, indeed, reasoning is a kind of seeing. Already we know that those plague spots called slums are a menace to us all and we are doing our best to put them out of existence. Unfortunately, however, we are neglecting the causes behind them. The slums may find a new expression not visible to our eyes and for this reason the more insidious and dangerous.

If our eyes were not so limited how many marvels we should see and how different we should become. Surely we should not be able to tolerate our present ways of living. We should have to establish another system and be different ourselves. Even now there are sights that we can't endure. For example, we build great hospitals for the care of the physically maimed. A broken or a mangled body at once excites us to pity and to help. But we know that there are worse things in the world than mangled bodies. There are mangled souls. Every day in the street people pass us with anguish in their consciousness. If we could see them, not as they seem to our eyes, but as they really are, we should be obliged to rush to their help. Our business of the moment would become insignificant. We should be controlled by our humanity, exactly as

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we should be controlled by the sight of a human being under the hoofs of a horse or under the wheels of a street car.

With clear eyes how differently we should see all people. Now we see, most of us at any rate, little more than their clothes. Indeed it is almost impossible for most of us to judge others except by clothes. When strangers meet, on shipboard, for example, how their eyes roam over clothes as they size up one another. We all know how disconcerting it can be for eyes to make this kind of inspection. But, after all, those eyes see very little. As Carlyle liked to point out, clothes have little to do with the real being. They have much to do with the position of the unreal being, the social being, in the very unreal organization that we call society. With clear eyes we should be so amused by the pretensions and the incongruities of this organization that we should laugh it out of existence. And as for most of the well-dressed people, though, at first, we might be tempted to laugh, if we saw with real clearness, we should soon cease to be amused and we should feel sorry. We should realize what opportunities they missed by being just what they were and what unhappiness many of them created for themselves. Occasionally, on the other hand, among them we should doubtless find heroes, all the more wonderful for keeping themselves fine in the midst of so many temptations to be selfish and ignoble.

Through showing the fineness in the world, the unsuspected fineness existing everywhere, clearness of vision would perhaps do us the most good. Every now and then something happens that, for the

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moment, strikes through our blindness. In some commonplace, perhaps uninteresting person, we suddenly catch a new and wonderful aspect. We find that an apparently dreary life is illuminated with a homely and yet beautiful unselfishness, a kind of radiance, or with a hidden idealism that lifts it beyond squalor.

The Hindus, in their philosophy, as far back as the ancient times, emphasized the fallibility of the senses and the folly of our relying on them for daily guidance. In refusing to be enslaved by sense indulgence they saw ever-widening avenues toward spiritual freedom. They pointed out the certain rewards that came from voluntary sense abnegation. In the things of sense they found only impermanent and delusive pleasure. "If they pass away by themselves, they cause the greatest pain to the mind; but if we forsake them ourselves, they cause endless happiness and peace."

Those of us who give ourselves up to the senses strengthen our prison. Each day we add new bolts and bars. The time is sure to come when we shall realize our folly. Some particular sense perhaps, after mastering us, will turn and gloat and jeer. Though once, seemingly, a friend, it has been in disguise the deadliest of enemies. Now is the moment for us to strike for freedom. The strong souls know. Their example ought to give us courage. The weak souls know, too. Through failure to strike, they may have abandoned themselves to life-long distress, with intervals of struggle and despair.

We often hear people speak of a sixth sense, usually in reference to some faculty of divination,

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almost miraculous. Luther Burbank, however, has used the phrase in another meaning. He believes that what we call personal magnetism is a kind of sense, possessed by some people to a high degree, carried by electricity, though not electricity in itself. Surely this sense, if sense it ought really to be called, has a God-like quality. Though it may seem to be a gift, it can be cultivated. For as we care for people we are cared for in return. The trouble with most of us is that we care very little for those outside on account of our great caring for ourselves. We choose to live by the law of diminishing returns.

It is our senses that make us so distressingly personal, that keep us thinking about ourselves and our feelings, that cause us so much hurt. If we were free from the thralldom of the senses we should be relieved of sensitiveness, that torment of the mind and the spirit. Those who have trained themselves not to be hurt have found the road to peace. Now they can look on life impersonally. Instead of the small view, they can take the large. Instead of grieving over themselves, they can enjoy all that is good in the great world outside.

## THE HOME

**A**N ARTICLE on home life that I have just been reading, like many articles on this subject, represents the home as an ideal place. There is no doubt that the home is an ideal place when the conditions are right. But how often do we find the conditions right? Very seldom. As a matter of fact the home is one of the most complicated institutions in the world. It may be one of the most dreadful of all places, developing some of the most unlovable human qualities.

In its simplest forms the home usually consists of two persons. They are usually husband and wife. They may also be mother and son or mother and daughter or father and daughter, or many other combinations. Here the two seem to have a comparatively little strain put upon them. The problem of each is to bear with the other, that is, to get on with the other comfortably and happily. Fortunate are they if one or if both may be included among those people who grow fonder with association and with time. There are many such. With them, familiarity, instead of breeding contempt, increases regard. They are likely to be those generous spirits who receive nourishment from all their associations, each year keeping their reasonableness of attitude and finding their lives growing richer. On the other hand, there are those who demand greater variety of association. If they have to live with one person they become bored and resentful. There are few sights in the world more dispiriting than that

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of a married couple who have exhausted their interest in each other and who drag wearily through life like prisoners bound to a chain. The home that they make, no matter how great may be the physical comfort, is certain to be the abode of disillusion and chagrin, and it is likely to express itself in misery and disaster.

However, some of the happiest homes I have ever known have consisted of two persons. Their frank acceptance of each other as they are seems to operate as a barrier to trouble. Where one of the two is a fond parent, there is, of course, danger of the spoiling that brings out selfish exactions. A happy home of this kind can do a great deal of damage to character. The evils that rise out of the over-fondness of a mother are none the less real because, in many instances, they may be hardly traceable. But it is where a family consists of several members, with many ties radiating out into a large family group, that the hardest tests arise. Now there are many foes to conquer. For example, in those larger groups there is almost certain to be at least one overbearing spirit, one tyrant. We all know of families where several or many languish under the yoke of tyranny. The situation is all the more pathetic where there is no rebellion. And where rebellion exists there is sure to be discord, either suppressed or breaking out into warfare. There are many homes, serene enough to the observer from the outside, that, under the surface, are like armed camps.

One of the tragedies of living results from the widespread human misunderstanding. And of all

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misunderstanding there is none sadder than that between parents and children. It is the irony of nature to make a great many people, as they age, grow stodgy. In their development they seem to stop at a certain period, now here, now there. For them the ideas of that period are the only true ideas. Meanwhile the children come along, breathing in the ideas of today and asserting them with exactly the same sureness and authority. There seems to be some excuse for the children, the excuse of youth. Perhaps, however, the excuse for the parents is just as valid and much more pathetic, the excuse of age. Much thought is taken nowadays about the importance of preparing people to become parents. But there is also the importance, seldom thought about, of training parents to endure and to sympathize with their children when the children have become old enough to think for themselves.

That large families, maintaining happy homes, exist there is no doubt. But the instances are much less numerous than is generally supposed. Where they do occur they are decidedly worth studying. Anyone lucky enough to include such a family in his acquaintance ought not to fail to turn it into profit. In nearly every case a little observation will show that a fine spirit is at work there, nearly always related to one person in the family, sometimes a woman, sometimes a man. Indeed there are families so inspired by one light in their midst that, long after it has passed out of the world, it seems to go on shining. Then, too, there are those families that are influenced by a light of this kind only when it is present. I have in mind a family whose members are much given to disputing and

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quarreling, usually over trifles, all but one, the father, a successful man, greatly respected and loved. The moment he enters the house the atmosphere changes. Inharmonious before, it becomes harmonious. Resentful words and frowns give place to smiles and friendly exchanges. I have often wondered if he knows what goes on when he passes out of the door. I suspect that he does, and that he is too wise to say anything.

The cynical aphorism, "Homes are terrible places," is true. But a saying of this kind can be reversed with equal truth. It all depends on the human qualities that lie behind. There are people who cannot live in homes. The complications are too trying to their nerves and to their dispositions. They ought to live alone. On the other hand, there are other people, and they consist of the vast majority, who cannot live alone. If they are without a home they are miserable. Strange to say, among them there are very few that ever take the trouble to realize their responsibility in making a home either happy or unhappy, and the importance of suppressing those qualities that destroy harmony and of developing the qualities that make for social co-operation.

Some time ago I had occasion to observe a difficult situation in a group of my acquaintance, one of those large, old-fashioned families, reacting against the intrusion of new ideas. A younger daughter had graduated from college and later, somewhat to the mortification of the other members, had gone to work. "After my interesting and active life in college," I once heard her say, "I couldn't

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stand sitting around and waiting and watching for a chance to escape by getting married."

Once established in the world of affairs, this girl grew more and more independent. Irritating conditions at home that her sisters and brothers accepted as inevitable and normal she resented with some bitterness. Perhaps the fault was partly hers. "I won't accept life on such terms," she once remarked. Shortly afterward I heard that she intended to take a little apartment by herself. Her mother was scandalized and bewildered and grieved. Nearly all of the others acted as if a reproach had been put upon them and a humiliation. Before that girl succeeded in making the break, she must have gone through scenes that were harrowing for the others as well as for herself. But it seemed to me that, whether she was in the wrong or in the right, what she did was, under the circumstances, perfectly right. She could not be happy at home and she could not help to create happy conditions. So she did the next best thing. As a matter of fact, after she left, the other members of the family showed much more respect and liking for her than they had done before.

There is no doubt that, for the sake of getting away from home, many girls make loveless marriages. This circumstance is unquestionably a much neglected factor in the divorce problem. Only too often those girls escape from one evil, into another, perhaps worse. Ibsen, in some of his plays, suggests that he believed marriage for a home was likely to be disastrous. And yet it is the motive of many a marriage that turns out well. There is a big dif-

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ference between marrying for a home and marrying for a happy home. Those women who prize homes do not necessarily prize happiness; they prefer the sense of possession and of authority and of physical comfort, of what they regard as success in life.

The lack of reserve and of privacy is often a cause of disturbance in home life. "There is scarcely an hour in the day," I recently heard a clever woman remark, "when I can be alone with my God." She belongs to one of those families where the members are constantly intruding on one another, bursting into rooms without knocking, talking loudly, making critical personal remarks, sneering and robbing life of dignity.

In many homes people appear at their worst, reaching as close to the savage as they can. The restraints of convention they cast off, together with all the accompanying protection. It is startling, at times, to note the difference between people when they are at home and when they are abroad. The most refined and courteous in public can at home be the most discourteous and coarse. There are many children, of well-to-do families, too, who never learn the elements of politeness till they grow old enough to mingle with the world outside.

Nearly always, where such conditions prevail, the reason may be traced to the attitude of parents. The love that drew those parents together may either have ceased to express itself or may have disappeared. There are comparatively few families where parents maintain the affectionate and respectful relations essential to concord and peace. As a result

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vast numbers of children are brought up in an atmosphere of disillusion, of weariness and resentment. It has a far worse influence on their character than all those pre-natal influences we hear so much about. The very parents that do the most wondering about the reasons why their children are not better children fail to see how active they have themselves been in spreading corruption.

Several years ago one of the best men I have ever met was severely censured on account of his treatment of his wife and family. His wife brought suit for divorce on the ground that he had abandoned her and their three children. He let it go by default and in reply to the charges he said nothing. But a few who were close to him understood and sympathized with his attitude of mind. He and his wife were always arguing and quarreling. He was determined that his children should not be brought up in such an atmosphere. He knew that the effect would be degrading to them as well as to his wife and himself. He preferred to provide them with a comfortable income and to let them live apart.

The law is very stern in its determination to protect the home. It lays great stress on the influence of home life in the shaping of character and it recognizes the mother as the chief figure there. If the mother is not what is called "a good woman," it will, in many instances, refuse to let her make a home for the children. Ruthlessly it will separate the children from the mother. And yet we all know that women who lead immoral lives can be good mothers. Some of the qualities that betray them into

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immorality may, in themselves, be good. Generous sympathies often lead to disaster. Besides, knowledge and experience of evil often become safeguards. Furthermore, women who are highly moral may nevertheless be very poor homemakers. The maintaining of a happy home requires qualities much more positive and active than resistance to this kind of temptation. There are multitudes of perfectly proper women who are baleful influences in the home life, who create all about them an atmosphere of discord. "If my mother weren't quite so good," I once heard a friend whimsically remark, "she would be a good deal better." At the time I suspected that he was referring to a habit of his mother's, well known among the neighbors, of indulging in censorious and malicious gossip, an expression of that high morality so valiantly maintained in many homes and so damaging to a real appreciation of goodness.

The evils that go on in home life, however, are only diseases that emphasize the beauty of real harmony. Where harmonious conditions prevail there is no institution in the world that can compare with a home. The trouble is that most people don't care enough to realize how the happiness of a group is related to the subordination of self and to consideration of others. Then, too, much of the misery in home life comes from motives that are either good in themselves or that disguise themselves as good. Just now, it must be admitted, the home is coming under arraignment. There are even those bold enough to question the right of parents to bring up their own children. The truth is we are getting away from some of our long-estab-

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lished illusions and venturing to look life in the face.

"The old-fashioned homes are disappearing," I recently heard a woman say, with regret in her tone. When I asked her what she meant, she replied: "When I was a girl, though we didn't have much money, we lived in a big, comfortable house, and we had enough to eat and enough to share with any friends that happened to drop in. We had an open-hearted way of living. Our house, like most of the houses of our friends, was an active social center, and it had all kinds of wholesome associations. In a true sense of the word, it gave us the feeling of home. Whenever we went away we knew we should have this place to go back to, and we should find the old happy life going on there just the same. Nowadays people are tending more and more to live in a make-shift way, in apartments and flats. They move often. In my youth the idea of moving would have been like a revolution or an earthquake. We felt that we were as deeply rooted in the home as if we were trees. We had our roots in the ground. Now people think nothing of moving once a year, or even oftener. The result is that we are losing the old stability and the old associations that did so much to give home its healthy atmosphere."

It seemed to me that in those remarks there was a good deal of truth. Perhaps the greatest loss lay in sentiment. The old-fashioned homes breathed into the spirit a kind of poetry radiating out of the deepest and the most sacred human relations. And yet the spirit of the home did not actually require such accessories. It could exist or it could

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flourish in a flat or an apartment. In both the old-fashioned homes and the new-fashioned homes the same human forces were at play. When I first saw New York, for example, I had the feeling that this great wilderness of a city contained no real homes. The rush and the roar, the life in the streets and the cafes and the hotels seemed to deny the home feeling. But I soon discovered that I was mistaken. Home life flourished there as it did everywhere else. And some of the very people who were most conspicuous in public managed to have sheltered little nests of their own where they led quiet and sane lives.

"My home is under my hat," I once heard a traveling man say. When I got to know him better I found out what he meant. Wherever he was he managed to create about him the home atmosphere by being at peace with himself. With a few books that he carried, with his pipe and his slippers, he could make a hotel room home-like. He knew how to achieve one of the greatest of human feats, to maintain serenity and poise under all conditions. He seemed to me much more remarkable than two actors of my acquaintance, husband and wife, who, for the sake of being together, would never accept engagements apart, and who, whenever they were on the road, would turn a couple of rooms in a lodging-house into a delightful home.

There are homes, usually old-fashioned, so self-satisfied in their atmosphere as to be irritating. Their members are likely to look out on the rest of the world with a consciousness of their own superiority. In this kind of home there is likely to be a

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good deal of happiness, and there is sure to be a narrowness that may lead to trouble, usually through the rebellion of the younger generation. So often, in those self-satisfied families an alien spirit appears, unable to endure the conditions, eager to break away, to the bewilderment of the others, who cannot understand this phenomenon.

In some homes there is a flatness, a dullness, an unspeakable weariness that causes a vast amount of misery and that sometimes expresses itself in distressing reactions. The trouble is usually due to lack of relation between the home and the healthy forces of life outside. For, it should be remembered, the home is essentially human and requires circulation of the blood. Without such circulation there is likely to be stagnation, and, as we all know, stagnation inevitably leads to disease. When, to the individual, life is flat, there is obviously something wrong. When the home is flat ill-health is operating there. Some of the most wretched homes present the hardiest appearance to the world. Their disease is all the more dangerous because it gives no warnings to the eye.

The religious spirit used to be a great aid to happiness in home life. Multitudes of homes it has helped to establish and to maintain on a sound basis. But with the decline of religion its influence has been considerably weakened. It was to religion that the home owed its old sense of permanence. And religion contributed the important factor of community of interest, expressing itself in community of spirit. During the past twenty-five years, however, the rebellion against orthodoxy has been a fearfully

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disturbing factor in the home. Many a home that would otherwise have been happy it has torn with dissension.

On the other hand, in well-ordered homes, kept healthy with good feeling, the best in human life is sure to flourish, and the highest types of humanity are invariably to be found. Fortunately, we are now reaching a broader and finer conception of the home as an institution. We are seeing that it is closely identified with the larger bond, sometimes called the social organization. Once women in homes, not so long ago, either, were supposed to be sheltered from the world outside as from contamination. Now they are finding out that, in this way, they lost more than they gained and that the world lost, too; the contamination could actually reach them in the most subtle ways and could flourish through their indifference.

## KEEPING ABREAST OF THE TIMES

WHEN I was asked by an organization of business men to speak on "The Importance to a Business Man of Keeping Abreast of the Times," I felt like smiling. It seemed as if the subject ought to be dealt with by one who had had a wide business experience. But the more I thought about it the less special it seemed and the more appealing. After all, could business really be said to be in a department of life all by itself? Was not all work virtually the same, an expression of those qualities common to humanity? So I began to think about the subject and I found it widening and growing richer, after the amiable habit of all human subjects. To every living being it was important. Moreover, its importance might continue elsewhere, after the end of what we called life. Many of us carelessly assumed that our real activity ceased after death. But how did we know? There were those who, with confidence, declared it was only after death our highest activity began, when we escaped from this muddy vesture of decay. Activity and sloth, being essentially of the spirit, might make us fit to meet the exactions and privileges of that other life or make us unfit.

Whether we agree or disagree about the future, sloth, in itself, is so unattractive a quality that we should all hate to know it was fastened on us; but the truth is, I suspect, that we are all in some ways slothful. Not one of us makes the most of our possibilities. Some of us, for a large part

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of the time, are only partly awake. And as for being alive to what is going on, it is, of course, plain that no one is fully alive. Though we have the good luck to live at the most interesting period in the history of the world, we are indifferent to our advantages. We don't even take the cream off. We are likely to be content either with skimmed milk, or with milk heavily watered with our prejudice and lazy indifference.

To be alive, to take advantage of the day, with its multitude of interests and opportunities, to keep the mind open and the sympathies alert, here surely is a task worth being born for. But we go at it in so haphazard a way, we show so much contempt for the wealth about us, the real wealth, that we ought not to wonder why so often we have the sense of failure. Take the newspaper, for example, the record of the times. Not so many generations ago, it would have been regarded as a marvel, an achievement perhaps unthinkable. The news of the world, massed together and attractively presented within a few hours after it occurred, impossible. Can't you hear some wiseacre of an earlier period presenting his eminently practical and sensible arguments in refutation of any prophet that should be so mad as to predict this service? Faulty as newspapers are, like all things that reach expression by way of the human consciousness, with its weaknesses, they are nevertheless mighty agents of human service, conveniences almost unparalleled. It is only the very superior and disdainful, who, nowadays, would venture to boast that they did not read the news.

Realization of the importance of keeping abreast of the times finds a dramatic illustration each morn-

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ing and each evening in our street cars and ferries and railway trains. But among the millions of newspaper readers how many really know how to read newspapers? How many know how to make newspapers one of their means of actually keeping abreast of the times? There are multitudes who read papers for the purpose of gratifying some of their ignoble qualities, love of gossip and scandal, indulgence of prejudice. They would even resent news that did not jibe with preconceived opinions. They wish to have life itself, so much more important and so much bigger than they could ever be, cut to their small measure. Are they, in truth, trying to keep abreast of the times? Surely not. They are trying to draw the times back to themselves, to the period where they really live, usually the dark ages. Those who with their prejudices read newspapers would do better not to read newspapers at all. Their apparent activity is one of the most pitiful forms of sloth, the kind of self-indulgence that tries to pass itself off as merit.

On the other hand, there are those who, in newspaper reading, are seemingly too open-minded. They are ready to believe virtually anything they see in print. Just now, however, their numbers are showing a considerable decline. They have been fooled too often. They know that the authoritative giants behind the words are not giants at all, but ordinary mortals, exactly like themselves, controlled by prejudices of their own, leading to the coloring of both fact and opinion. They also know that accuracy does not jibe with human frailty. But, on this subject, they are likely to be a little severe,

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to assume that if they were in this particular kind of work, they would themselves be more accurate. And yet, the critical attitude, in spite of its failure to make allowances, is certainly far more satisfactory in its results than the kind of open-mindedness that is gullibility, that accepts prejudice for truth and ill-considered opinion for dogma. To be able to read a newspaper judiciously requires, on the part of the reader, generous concession and shrewd judgment. So often, in trying to keep abreast of the times, we keep abreast of gross misrepresentation, of progress that has no reality. In other words, to make newspapers beneficial in their effect on us, we have to know both what to read and how to react from what we read. Perhaps most important of all is to be able to read without forming any judgment whatever, to keep from being influenced by those reports that may be associated with unfairness or with malice.

The practice of newspaper reading, interesting as it is, varies according to the interest in our own minds. The more closely we are identified with life, the more we can get out of newspapers and the more adroit we shall be in choosing and in rejecting and accepting. Similarly, in our attitude toward life itself, we shall receive in proportion as we give. It is all a matter of relation. The people that don't keep up with the times merely subject themselves to self-denial. By starving themselves they become mentally and morally and spiritually anemic. Whatever their business in life may be, whether they are successful from the worldly point of view or unsuccessful, they are essentially failures. The exclusive people exclude themselves. The in-

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clusive people are always to be found at that table in the banquet of life where there is the finest service and the best food.

You must often have noticed those fields that, in dry season, harden and crack. They are suffering for moisture. Without it they cannot produce. When it comes they drink it up eagerly. At once they look more healthy. Soon they are breaking into grass, perhaps into flowers, showing that they are alive and able to do their part in expressing the wholesomeness and the beauty of the world.

There are many minds like those fields. They grow dry and they harden. They, too, are suffering for lack of the moisture that comes through springs of interest, through human sympathy, through caring. Fortunate beyond most of their kind are they if just one spring bubbles there. As a rule, instead of being fertilized, they grow harder. The time may come when they will seem to be like ivory.

This disaster overtakes many a woman and many a man. It is one of the greatest tragedies of living, all the more deplorable because, as it goes on, it may not give the slightest warning. It is like those painless diseases that stealthily creep through the system. And like those diseases, it may soothe even while it destroys. We see it working all about us among the people who refuse to keep abreast of the times. Their minds are drying and hardening and cracking. Their plight is more distressing than the plight of the fields. For when the moisture comes the fields never refuse to absorb. But around those hardening minds innumerable springs are bubbling. The minds look on and refuse to take in the refreshment. They are satisfied as they are.

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There are people who, at varying periods in life, come to a stop. They are like those troublesome children who hang on mother's skirts, creating obstacles and disturbance, interfering with progress. In the business world we can see them joining the melancholy ranks of failure. Sometimes they know they have been left behind and they helplessly long to catch up. Among such there is hope. Through their very longing and understanding, they may yet start one of those springs working. But for those who, lagging behind, cherish the illusion that they are really ahead there is little hope. They are in the ivory stage.

I know a man who years ago became enamored of a kind of a derby hat, for a brief time in fashion, with a high, square crown. When he had worn out the first one he had another hat made exactly like it and he has gone on duplicating it ever since. By some curiously psychological process he could not get away from that hat. He wears it still. If I were to see it in China I should know that he was near by. In his attitude toward hats he lives in the period of that fashion. He provides a physical illustration of a kind of mind very common in the world, perhaps, in a sense, universal. For nearly all of us, in some way, are reactionary. One of the most radical men I have ever known, a revolutionist often condemned for his views, though less condemned now than he used to be, is, in some ways, absurdly conventional. A convincing argument might be made to show that some of his qualities could not possibly go with others of his qualities. His character is made up of contradictions. Ahead of the times as he is, he is also behind the times. For

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all the springs of sympathy that bubble in his mind, there are parts of his mind that seem to have ossified, that are beyond the reach of fertilization. Moreover, his advanced ideas work against him by making him think that all his ideas are advanced and by deepening his satisfaction with himself. With a case of this kind in mind, easily paralleled in everyone's acquaintance, it might, now and then, be well for us all to make an impersonal examination of ourselves for the purpose of discovering whether there are any spots in the field of consciousness that betray symptoms of hardening.

Is there really any way by which we can keep our minds from hardening, by which we can be sure that our minds are alive and healthy? There surely must be. Perhaps we can learn from observing those who perform the feat. Invariably they will be found to be abreast of the times. It does not follow that they will be in the thick of the competitive struggle. On the contrary, they may seem to be far away from competition. They thrive out of business as well as in business. Their secret is not a matter of place or of circumstance. It is essentially of the spirit. They know how to live. They may indeed be said to be the great artists in living. Every waking instant they are alive and happily energizing. Invariably they will be seen to care less for themselves than for others. They prove the truth that life is a paradox. The less they seek for themselves, the more they get. And the more they give the more they have. Theirs is the supreme magic. They make us see the truth of the fable of Aladdin's lamp.

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In other words, the whole secret of living is caring about living. With practice caring develops. As one grows older living becomes a finer art, with increasing rewards. A clue may be found in the old Latin saying, "Nothing human is foreign to me," and in the definition of what is human there must be included the implication of the divine. The man that keeps abreast of the times keeps abreast of all time. He is the inheritor of all the ages. If he is willing to take the best he finds it waiting to be taken and holding out its arms. Goethe's saying, that a man gets from travel what he takes, applies to all living. The mind turned to ivory is already dead. Multitudes of dead people are walking about in the world. Perhaps some of us are among them. A little concern about the question may, in itself, be an assurance of life and a warning.

Can we learn to care about living? If we ask the question we show that we already care. But it is not enough to ask and to sink back again. We must examine and work. As we grow older we are continually reminded of the problem's practical aspect. In recent years it has been presented by the world with an insistence almost heartlessly cruel. By misquoting Doctor Osler, the newspapers spread a debilitating thought through the world, that the usefulness of a man was likely to be impaired after the age of forty. Instantly, thousands of men, engaged in the fierce competitive struggle, were seized with fright. Those who allowed themselves to stay frightened accepted another handicap. Those who took measures for self-protection turned a bad thought into a healthy influence.

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All business men know the importance of keeping abreast of the times. Around them they see disasters resulting from falling behind. The man who is alive to the new ideas has the best chance of reaching the head of the procession, provided, of course, he has initiative and energy. Those who look calmly on, recognizing what is true and failing to react, are among the most pathetic examples of inefficiency. It is not enough to see. It is necessary to do.

Of recent years there has been a notable change in business, all the more remarkable because it is not commercial, but ethical. The business man of today who is merely competitive, is falling behind in the procession. The tricks that once might have established success would be far more likely to result in failure now. The business men who aren't quickened by the new spirit are giving themselves up to decay. "Never lie about what you have to sell. And never encourage a buyer to take anything that he does not really want," are two precepts that a highly successful business man is always impressing on his clerks. He has learned that too much urging makes the resentful buyer and that misrepresentation undermines trade.

There are certain merchants who enjoy a worldwide reputation for absolute honesty, the Chinese. Why should they be more honest than most merchants? Are they not controlled by the universal impulses? Surely. The chances are that in their nature they are very like the rest of the world. But many generations ago certain forces must have been at work in China, tending to place business

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honor on a high plane. If we could go into the history of Chinese trade, we should probably discover how these forces started and how they operated. Now they are well established as a national ideal. In this country we are consciously going through a similar process. But it will take many years to overcome the reputation we have won throughout the world for being over-shrewd Yankees.

Perhaps the low ideals that used to be associated with business resulted from its humble origin. Once to barter was regarded with contempt by those who lived on the product of labor, the superior folk, born, as they believed, to be served, so ungrateful and so ready to scorn the hands holding them up. Business became a scramble, with success as its goal, success at almost any price. Perhaps the marvel is that out of such competition, representing life or death, any good should have resulted. But behind it there was always the vital element of service. The producer and the distributor were absolutely necessary. Gradually the distributor won the advantage. In many kinds of work he became the master, exacting and cruel, to the point of mercilessness. The principle of "live and let live" gave way to the principle of "live or perish," with all the intensity of feeling that had to result, the cut-throat competition. It still goes on. It will go on till mankind realizes its folly. Of late there are signs that it sees the danger and is trying to live up to some ideal of service. The ethical movement in business is one of the most hopeful signs of the times. It recognizes the increasing understanding on the part of society, bringing sterner exactions, a

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new co-operative tendency. It also recognizes the importance of eliminating waste, by which the public has, for so many generations, paid so dear a price.

The business man that works alone and that can only work alone, is becoming a sorry figure. He finds himself, a unit, pitted against those combinations of units that, in every instance, are so much stronger than the combined strength of the elements. Nowadays the man who can co-operate, who can work harmoniously and spontaneously with others, is the most efficient. He allies himself to other minds, perhaps far richer than his own. From his contacts he is always receiving new ideas. One of the most successful men I know, the man whose success has been founded on bold and original thinking, is absolutely lacking in originality. I have never known him to say or to do an original thing. And yet, he fairly teems with clever ideas, which he gathers from others. "If I had to rely on my own mind," I once heard him say, "I should go broke." In a sense, however, he does rely on his own mind, and his own mind is wonderful, by virtue of possessing one quality, alertness in recognizing and in seizing everything good that comes within its range. This man keeps the whole world working for him. He has the strength of a multitude. He walks abreast of the leaders. Though he may, in fact, be small, he seems like a leader himself.

After all, falling behind the times and growing old, getting out of it, is like an infatuation. People become infatuated with themselves, as they have been in the past, with their ideas, with their hobbies,

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with their points of view. They don't keep changing. They don't keep renewing. They grow stale and flat and unprofitable. And the instant they become unprofitable they suffer. The world turns on them and rends, or turns away from them and forgets. This kind of stodginess there is no market for. It damages every phase of service. Of all sickness it is, indeed, one of the most debilitating kinds. And, remember, whatever we may think of other kinds of sickness, this kind is mental. The remedy lies side by side with the disease. All we have to do is to see and to work. In business and out of business we can resist and gain a victory. It is never too late. Perhaps victory is won the instant we realize. For realization means sense of loss, of opportunities missed, of the importance of catching up and taking what is ours.

So many of us unconsciously fall into the habit of excluding much of the good that comes in our way, both people and things. Our very morality may be a means of exclusion. Suppose we want to know only the good people. Of all people, they may be among the most stodgy. In their goodness there may be the self-satisfaction that is so sure a sign of retrogression and decay. "Not till the sun excludes thee do I exclude thee," says Walt Whitman, and the meaning of the words we ought always to keep alive in the consciousness.

There is an old librarian who lives not many miles from one of the big cities. His beard and his hair are long and gray. He looks like an octogenarian, that is, at first glance. But at the second glance he shows that his eyes are like burning coals. The

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spirit behind that mask of age is aflame, and the flame is continually fed. This man keeps abreast of the times, by loving his work and by loving all the sources of refreshment that come to him through the work. The latest and the richest thought of the world flows into his mind. He cares not merely for the outside of books, but for what is within, for the soul. To hear him talk is in itself a refreshment. He loves life so much that he hates to go to bed. Far into the night he sits up reading. He has reached the period where he needs little sleep, and where he feels that he must enjoy to the full every day. He surely is an example and a reproach to those of younger generations who find little in life that is worth while, and who waste a large part of their thought and their time in complaining about the dullness that, as they think, lies outside themselves, and that really is of their own creation.

An ambitious business man that I happen to know continually betrays his keen competitive sense. Success or failure in those about him he believes he can gauge to a nicety. Toward those who are failing he adopts a manner very different from the manner he uses toward successful. In this way he apparently thinks that he keeps himself in the successful current. But he forgets that he makes a great many enemies among the unsuccessful, who, any day, may become successful. He is unaware, too, that he acquires discredit among the more broadminded and kindly disposed of the successful, who see in him a sycophant and a time-server. He cannot realize that the man who keeps abreast of the times ought to be large-minded and generous, that he ought to show a spirit capable of relating

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itself to all the people about him and drawing from them the friendly regard that does so much to insure happy social relations and to develop well-rounded living.

The large-minded and generous attitude is, of course, the only one worth taking. Any other is a compromise and a limitation of one's self. There is such a thing as buying success at so bitter a price that failure would be infinitely preferable. I have in mind now the case of a man who has built up a great business on the blood of those who have been in his employ. A large part of his life he has spent in scheming how to get most by paying least. Meanwhile his mind and his soul have shriveled. And he has lost practically as well as spiritually. For, in many ways, he shows that he was endowed with an original mind, capable of large, even of noble conceptions. If he had followed the higher rather than the lower tendency, he might have been far more successful than he is now and a far greater character as well. The time that he spent in his petty and ignoble calculations he might have given to really productive thinking. He believes that he is one of the most advanced of living men. He talks about his methods with a pride that, in itself, is a measure of his blindness. Nature punishes him by making him display his worst qualities in his boasting.

The old small methods, associated with competition, the cause of so much loss to the world in the way of health and character and social feeling, are bound to give way before the new spirit, which places profit not above but below humanity. Each

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year the world realizes more keenly the need of establishing higher standards. The time is unquestionably coming when certain kinds of success, so highly esteemed today, will be regarded as disgraceful.

The surest measure of health is the measure of life. And in the social organism health operates very much as it does in the individual. The world is just waking up to a realization of the importance of keeping the social consciousness sound. The task is so tremendous that it is not surprising many people should believe it can be accomplished only by a revolution. But the greatest revolutions are not those that make the most noise. They can go on without the sound of a gun. They reach deeper than ideas, deeper even than the sub-conscious. They give life to elemental feelings overlaid and smothered by many generations of misunderstanding and convention. Not to be aware of what is going on in this regard throughout the civilized nations of the earth is to be woefully behind the times. And yet there are multitudes who are unaware. Serenely they repose in the consciousness of a bygone period. They even take a pride in their attitude and give it flattering names.

Awareness is surely one of the most effective means of keeping abreast of the times. Here we all fail. We are only imperfectly aware. About us we note expressions of deep-lying forces that strive to convey their meaning to us; but we understand only imperfectly, or we misunderstand or we remain indifferent. There are those who believe that the souls of the departed are struggling to communicate

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with us as we pass through the fog of material living. The obstacle lies, we are told, not as we so fondly believe, in the condition of their being, but in the conditions of ours. Similarly, the truth about the social consciousness does not so much elude us as we elude it. It not only waits to be taken. It continually offers itself. When it is finally brought to light, the chances are that the world will see it has always been understood by a few who, in vain, have tried to make it known to others.

## THE DEAD

MAETERLINCK speaks of the general avoidance of the subject of death. He thinks that we ought not to avoid it, that we ought not to follow the instinct that makes us avoid it. Perhaps he is right. And yet I wonder if there is not deep-seated wholesomeness in our turning away from it, in our preference for thinking about life.

For most of us death is the surest of all things and the least sure. We know that it has come to others about us, and yet we feel that it is far away from us, so far away that there is no reason why we should be concerned.

Here is the life instinct at work, giving assurance of permanent hold on living.

In the state of health people are certain of their own immortality. It is only by effort of the will that they can make themselves believe their bodies are mortal.

And perhaps in this profound instinct there lies something more than illusion, the promise of immortality, the claim of the soul to life that never ends.

I am never directly or indirectly associated with death without being impressed by its unimportance as compared with life.

Perhaps in this regard we are all alike. We merely use different terms to express our feeling.

When we know that death is near we say that it is death we are bewailing. But it is really the end of life.

## THE DEAD

It is interesting to see how people behave when death threatens, through sickness or through the loss of a relative or friend. At its approach they all become kindly, not only to the afflicted, but to one another. It is as if death made them realize the worth of life, with its complex human relations. They act as if they had become suddenly alive to the importance of making these relations beautiful. During sickness and for a long period after death members of families will treat one another with far more consideration and affection than they usually do. It may take weeks or months for them to fall back to their old attitude of indifference and criticism and resentment.

"Speak nothing but good of the dead" has always seemed to me to be a somewhat unsatisfactory proverb. It is really a poor translation of the Latin words, which really mean, "Speak no thing of the dead unless the thing be good."

I wish that the saying might be changed to "Speak nothing of the living unless it be good."

And yet, the proverb, as it stands, expresses the attitude of the human race toward death. To every one death gives a wonderful dignity. And yet, that dignity could not be if there had not once been life. The dignity given by death is really borrowed from life.

One of the best lessons that death teaches us is this lesson of dignity. If we could only be half as considerate of the living as we are of the dying or of the dead most of our problems would solve themselves. Life, relieved of its burden of egotism and of the evils resulting from the strife engendered by egotism, would take on a new beauty and a new sympathy.

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Some time ago death came close to me through the illness of a friend. For several days I was associated with the intense life that always goes on in and about a sickroom, a life that is so largely feminine, almost wholly, indeed, controlled by feminine influences. I remember thinking of the resemblance between death and birth. It was as if, in sickness, the man who lay on that bed of pain had been given back to womankind.

He had a good many faults, that man, together with rare virtues. He was one of those men that hated to be regarded as more than human. He rather gloried in his faults.

Nevertheless, we spoke of him only with praise. We thought only of his virtues. If his faults came into our minds at all we at once turned them to virtues.

Most of the women about the sickroom were religious. They knew that the invalid followed no creed except the elastic creed of human sympathy. Several of them grieved because he did not believe as they did. Two of them, of different faiths, prayed for him, each in her own way.

It was as if they were praying to different Gods.

There is a man of my acquaintance who takes what seems to me to be a strange attitude toward death. He regards it as of no account at all. The reason is that he considers life, that is human life, so unimportant. To him, human life is a mere incident of eternity, a mysterious expression of intense energy. Our life, he thinks, may be only a dream. What is important to his view is not the present, but the distant future, the working out of the eternal idea. Consequently, this man takes

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toward the experience of every day a highly philosophical attitude. He meets his duties conscientiously and he lets the rest go. He doesn't trouble to strive for happiness or to consider whether he is happy or unhappy. His philosophy gives him beautiful serenity of mind, freedom from fear and concern for the immediate future. Death becomes a mere incident in a vast plan.

Perhaps, way down in our consciousness, we all think about death more than we acknowledge to ourselves. And there are those who think about death altogether too much for their peace of mind. In my own acquaintance I know several men who look distressed the moment they hear a reference to death. They include one who will never look on death or hear death discussed if he can possibly escape. This man is, of course, morbid. He has allowed death to prey on his mind, to fill him with terror.

The greatest comfort that can be given to those who fear death comes from those who have had the widest experience with death. Doctors and nurses say that, in most cases, as death approaches it mercifully removes fear from the minds of the dying. There are comparatively few instances where the dying express concern. Nearly always they are ready. Often they are eager to go. And I suspect that in the cases we sometimes hear of, where the dying have expressed terror, the cause may be traced to some strange twist in the brain, resulting from wrong education, perhaps from unwholesome ideas early established there, or from long developed defects of character, or from odd turns of disease.

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How we cherish the last words spoken by the dying! They are likely to assume an importance far beyond their actual meaning. On the other hand, such words sometimes express deep-seated feelings that could not break through the restraints we put upon ourselves and upon one another in every day life.

In dying, people sometimes say finer things than they ever said in living. And they do finer things than they could ever have done in living. And yet the distinction may consist mainly in words.

Dying makes what is left of living seem precious. The dying, and those about to die, feel that these last moments must be made beautiful. They cannot be permitted to include the bitterness and the enmities of the living that seem inexhaustible. So often we hear people who, in dying, resign the old enmities and ask and grant forgiveness. Through such forgiveness they help to make dying beautiful. And, incidentally, they offer a lesson to those who go on living the apparently inexhaustible life.

Sometimes we see people who seem to rise, as it were, from the dead.

For an interval they are like chastened spirits. It may take them a long time to get back to the discordant ways of living.

On the other hand, there are those who, after a narrow escape from death, resume all the old antagonisms that made life hideous for them. They act as if they had learned nothing from their communication with death, as if it had not even given them a deeper appreciation of the beauty of life.

Walt Whitman has said some of the finest things ever said in literature on the subject of death, in his

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"Ode to Immortality." He calls death "lovely and soothing," and he celebrates in noble words the approach of death "serenely arriving, arriving, in the day, in the night, to all, to each, sooner or later, eloquent death." But if you will examine the poem closely you will see that, in seemingly celebrating death, the poet is really celebrating life. He is celebrating the immortality of nature, which finds its highest potential expression in the life of man. Many other poets, beside Whitman, have sung of the indestructibility of nature. In it they include the indestructibility of the soul. Perhaps, through death the soul makes its escape. In giving up its prison with its five windows, it may joyously assert its relationship to the beauty it has been separated from, the beauty it has looked out on, longingly, aspiringly. In this sense, death must be the finest achievement of life.

Robert Browning, in his poem "Prospice," says:  
I would hate that death bandaged my eyes, and  
forebore,  
And bade me to creep past.  
No! let me taste the whole of it, fare like my peers,  
The heroes of old,  
Bear the brunt, in a minute pay glad life's arrears  
Of pain, darkness, and cold.  
For sudden, the worst turns the best to the brave,  
The black minute's at end,  
And the element's rage, the fiend voices that rave,  
Shall dwindle, shall blend,  
Shall change, shall become first a peace out of pain,  
Then a light, then thy breast,  
O, thou soul of my soul! I shall clasp thee again,  
And with God be the rest!

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Browning had faith. In his mind there was no doubt that among the dead there waited for him the wife that he had loved so devotedly and that he was to love through eternity. Such terrors as death had were slight compared with the rewards, including the supreme reward to be found in reunion.

There is a great difference among people in their attitude toward the dead. With some the dead quickly become forgotten. With others the dead are painful memories. With still others the dead are a solace and a hope, as they should be.

In my acquaintance there are two men who think a great deal about their dead. One says: "After living for more than sixty years life has become for me a battlefield. I feel at times as if I were surrounded with the slain." He is referring, of course, to the relatives and the friends taken by death. The other man, a few years older, says: "As I grow older life grows more beautiful. Most of those nearest and dearest to me, it is true, have gone out of my sight; but they haven't gone out of my heart. They are safe there. And they are finer, and they are more lovable and more enjoyable than they could ever be in life. All the distracting little qualities that they used to have and all the qualities that I didn't happen to approve of or to like have disappeared. What remains of them is their best."

One trouble with most of us in our relation to our dead is that we take so selfish and so narrow a view. We often assume that because the dead have been taken away they are not so well off now. Our loss

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keeps us from reflecting that the change may be their gain. Incidentally it keeps us from achieving gain from our loss. There is no doubt that we can wonderfully profit by losing someone we have loved.

Our dead ought to have a great influence over us. In many cases they give a wonderful enrichment to life. On the other hand we may make them a means of impoverishment. Only the other day I heard a man speak with bitterness about the loss of his son, his only child, inexplicably stricken with a dreadful sickness that could not be diagnosed. He seemed to think that fate had singled him out for injustice and cruelty. He spoke as if his dead made an ugly bruise in his consciousness. From this trial he had profited not at all. Moreover, his bitterness had made him disagreeable at home, increasing the suffering of his wife, who was trying to bear the loss with courage.

On the other hand, those who meet loss by death with a sense of all the spiritual implications find themselves related to the world of the unseen. Before they were bound by the ties of the earth. Now they have acquired a new and beautiful world. They become spiritualized. They are conscious of rare forces all about them, invisible presences. They are like people who, after living in a provincial town, travel in foreign countries. But with them the discoveries are greater than any foreign country could hold, perhaps, greater than they could themselves express in words.

It is well for us now and then to remind ourselves that the dead are in the vast majority. It is

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only the few that are living, a minority almost negligible. Now we have a wholesome sense of the transitoriness of life for each of us, the impermanence. We are like players in continuous vaudeville. Only we never repeat. While we are on the stage we think we are the whole performance. It may be that, in truth, it is the dead that have reason to feel pity. Perhaps, from a higher sphere, they look back to their experience on this plane, and rejoice that they have been promoted, and marvel at the blindness that caused them to take so false a view of death.

For such reasons we may question Maeterlinck's fancy in "The Blue Bird," that the dead sleep except when they are remembered by their loved ones on earth. Surely, it is a very limited conception. It gives to the dead small chance for resuscitation. For, in the eternity of their days, there is only a brief period when their loved ones remain on earth. Soon, like themselves, the loved ones are gathered into the vast majority. Besides, why should we think of the dead as sleeping? Why should we identify them with the physical body that they must be glad to have cast off?

But, whether we can do the dead good, or whether they are beyond our help, there is no doubt that, for us, they can be an ever living influence. In a sense, even as we live, we belong to the dead. We continue the life that they had on earth. We even keep alive many of their qualities. And, just as they created us, so we create those that are to come afterward, in their turn to be included among the dead, not merely in the physical sense, but men-

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tally and morally and spiritually. What we do and what we think and what we are all combine to make human inheritance. By it we shall be remembered, and by it we shall live again. Where our contribution is evil, in evil we shall endure. Where it is good, we shall go down the ages like luminous presences. The success of today may be the disaster of tomorrow and of other days to be. The failure of today may be an everlasting success.

Is it unlikely that, in time, human beings will change from the present commonly accepted attitude toward the bodies of the dead? Already there are signs of change. Where once the body was consigned to earth, in many instances it is now given to the flames, to escape corruption and to be cleansed by fire and sent back to the air and the dust. Such ashes as one gathers are either reverently treasured in urns or buried or are scattered to the winds. Here we find recognition of the body's end of service, of its return whence it came. It is sacred and beautiful because it once expressed the spirit that gave it life and because it beautifully served. Its work over, it is of no more real value than the hair cut from the head in life, which only sentimental lovers or over-fond mothers are tempted to cherish. Surely we shall all come to see that to keep the body for days as we do now, to surround it with the dark habiliments of woe, to put it on exhibition and to mourn over it, is a proof not of affection but of misunderstanding and weakness and of uncontrolled and misguided feeling.

We often speak of our bodies in relation to death as if we were loath to leave them behind. We asso-

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ciate them with the very principle of life. And yet is it not possible that in death we shall experience a sense of relief in escape from the burden of bodies? The bodies themselves, though we carelessly think of them as destructible, are obviously indestructible. They go back to nature, perhaps to work in some other form, apparently expressing the life principle but really acting as its servant, its symbol.

We all agree that nothing is lost in nature. In the material sense, the dead have not passed out of the world. Though we say they return to dust, they may live again in many varieties of beauty. There are those that believe this kind of persistence is the only claim of the dead to immortality. In this sense, there is no death in the world. There is only change. And, in this sense, the whole world is alive. The intelligence behind the universe may be the great unifying soul. From this hypothesis it follows that all things live, even those we call inanimate.

To most human beings, however, this thought is unsatisfactory. It gives them no means of explaining themselves and their relation to what we consider life. Is it possible that they have been developed so high and yet remain only transient expressions of the universal force? Is what they experience an end in itself? If such were the case, their pilgrimage on earth would seem to them a poor thing, hardly worth the making. Some of them find comfort in the theory of perfectibility. They deny the existence of the individual. If there is individuality it covers the whole line of descent.

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Each of us faces the task of carrying on the work of evolving higher types. The transgressor is he who impairs or retards or in any way tends to defeat the work. The orthodox believers, on the other hand, regard this life as a mere preparation for the life beyond sense. To them death means, not less life but more. Delusive as the senses so obviously are, how can we trust them as we do? How can we yield to them? Out of their reach the soul will have greater freedom to reach the divine. Death now is a triumph, all the more wonderful if it has been prepared for by a life that makes adjustment easy.

Some of the ancient people used to make a systematic practice of reminding themselves of death. They wished it to be closely identified with life, to become so familiar that, at its approach, there should not be the suggestion of terror. Then, too, there was the ancient practice of ancestor worship reminding those alive of that other life so much more multitudinous, beyond the reach even of time. When we look at life in this way it takes on a marvelous significance. Now all that we think and do finds its place in eternity.

People often wonder if, in the other life, they will be able to know and to enjoy their loved ones on this plane. The doubt may, at times, be a torment. Both the doubt and the question suggest a fear of the power behind life, a lack of confidence, indicating an unsound attitude. The truly religious soul believes that the power is beneficent. It has the peace of reliance. If the ties of earth are not maintained the reason must be sufficient.

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Perhaps they are only a means to other ties, deeper and richer, a finer expression of the universal harmony.

Many religious people pray for a happy death. In their prayer there is a kind of preparation. But even the unreligious and the irreligious may experience at the end the peace that passes our understanding in life. Calmly, without apprehension, the body ceases its activity. And in the change, so quiet and yet so startling, there seems to be something gone. It may be the animating principle. It may be the soul. It may be, too, that the two are really one and the same.

## DOING ONE THING AT A TIME

**T**HREE is comfort in the thought that we can do only one thing at a time. If it is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well. To do it well, we must concentrate. In other words, we ought to do a thing or not do it. Doing a thing, as we say, half-heartedly, is miserable and a cause of misery. If we did things or didn't do them we should all be happy and well. We should be happy because we were well and we should be well because we were happy. The trouble with most of us is that we don't try to do one thing at a time. We try to do two things at a time or more than two things. We attend to the thing in hand and we distract ourselves by thinking of some other thing or of a multitude of things. In this way we keep our minds, not tranquil as they should be, but seething.

The mind loves to do one thing at a time. In this way only it fulfils its nature. By being subjected to the effort to make it do more, it flies like a shuttle from one thing to another. The marvel is that, under such circumstances, it can do as well as it does. But, of course, under such circumstances, it never does its best. The really successful people of the world, the calm, well-poised natures, open to the sources of healthfulness and of power, have a genius for never trying to do more than one thing each moment of their conscious lives. They know the folly of trying to do more, the nervous tension, the flurry, the ineptitude, the waste, and the failure none the less certain, because, from the point of

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view of the world, it may seem like success. They know that it is always breaking out into disease, through large expressions and through small, the reason being that it is itself disease.

There are periods in life when it becomes imperative for us to learn to do one thing at a time and to maintain the effort. If we don't learn, we may become the prey of the disintegrating forces that come in so many shapes, among them grief, fear, worry and all the other hideous expressions of concern for oneself. To do one thing at a time is to reach absolute freedom. It is to have the power that religious people are always praying for, whether they know it or not. It means rising above oneself and reaching the place of certain achievement.

Through self-forgetfulness lie the best achievements. All enthusiasts have found out. When they come back from their quest they feel as if they had left fairyland. For everyone of us there is a fairyland waiting. To get there all we have to do is to leave the petty vexations and considerations behind, the things that interfere with healthy concentration. One of the great sadnesses of the world is that so many people should refuse to enter. They prefer to be miserable outside. Some of them are so foolish as to feel sorry for those whose privilege it is to live in the charmed world of self-forgetfulness and outside effort. They think their own selfish and sordid world is better.

Often the torment of the mind leads to concentration. It says in a message unmistakable: "If you

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don't treat me right I shall go mad. Through your concern for yourself you have made me sick. What I need now is exercise and there is only one way of giving it to me. That is, by letting me alone, by letting me attend to my outside business, instead of forcing me to keep noticing a tiresome creature like you."

When this kind of message comes it is time for action. The first efforts to control thought are likely to be failures. The first success will be transient. Permanent control may be secured only after months or years of striving. But the goal is worth any sacrifice or any pain. To reach it is to gain the highest prize of life, to be admitted into the sphere of the universal, filled with peace and with the power that lies in peace, fulfilling, not the worst in one's nature, but the best, developing, not illusion, but reality. Here, indeed, is the paradox of living. By losing the self we gain something much better.

To do one thing at a time, to keep doing it, to reach absolute concentration, makes the doing of good absolutely essential. We can't possibly concentrate on what is evil. The healthy forces of being rebel. The soul looks on, appalled, crying its warnings. The nerves refuse to transmit pleasant sensations. There are repeated reactions against the wrong-doing in the system, denials and protests, that keep the mind in turbulence. When we hear of the adventures of the self-indulgers we always get biased reports. It is for this reason that they are so misleading and harmful. For example, we never hear of the excitability in this kind of living, the fever, the distraction, the upset, the loss of

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serenity that is so important a factor in meeting the circumstances of each day, the inability to live in the realm of self-forgetfulness. So often the hours will seem to be surrounded with a kind of miasma, like the atmosphere that rises from an unhealthy pool. It is, indeed, only the wholesome minded, the workers outside themselves, that really live in fresh air and keep the whole machinery of being in stimulating activity.

In zoological gardens it is interesting to observe the difference in the demeanor between monkeys and the higher type, the gorillas. The monkeys are nervous, alert, their eyes darting here and there as their attention keeps changing. But the gorillas are much quieter, much more serene. When they turn their attention to an object they regard it soberly, looking it straight in the face. They are not the prey of a multitude of superficial reactions. On the contrary, they have control.

A similar difference exists among human beings. Some people pride themselves on their quick superficial reactions. They are always disturbed, keyed up, on the go. But they merely skim the surface of experience. The quieter people, looking life straight in the face, controlled, serene, see far beneath the external. They live in the depths, seldom or never reached by agitation and storm. They do one thing at a time.

## DISPOSITION

**O**N a sailboat, some time ago, I was caught with several others in a calm. We had expected to reach our destination at six o'clock, in ample time for dinner. We might not be able to reach it before midnight. The situation was rather serious. We had no provisions on board. Some of us did not like the idea of going without dinner. All of us expressed ourselves. It was interesting to watch the differences.

One man was furious. He began to use language scarcely fit for the ears of the ladies. His face grew red. He was making the disappointment as hard for himself as he possibly could. Incidentally, he was making it a little harder for the rest of us. After that outburst we all subsided into a more or less sullen discontent, all but one man, a man of about fifty, who took the whole thing as a joke. He proceeded to cheer us up. In a short time he had us laughing. Presently he started some games.

We reached food about nine, none the worse for our little mishap. Incidentally, we had profited by a good example. That smiling, easy-going man must, I think, have made us all aware that he was the possessor of a gift of providence peculiarly rich.

Since that time I have several times seen that man in circumstances that would have made most people very irritable. Irritation, however, he has never betrayed. Invariably he meets untoward circumstance with a smile, and that smile, strangely

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enough, has the effect of changing the character of the circumstance. He can draw pleasure where most of us would draw pain, and where most of us would frown or grow resentful or angry, he can smile.

The other night I stood at the street corner, waiting for a car. When it appeared, it was one of those half-open cars, and crowded. Men were clinging to the bars and standing precariously on the footboard. In front of me walked a middle-aged woman with a very pleasant face. She approached that crowded footboard. One of the men moved back to indicate that she might step up beside him. Swiftly she surveyed the crowd of hangers-on. Then, with a smile, she shook her head.

That smile caused every man to leap from the board. The effect was really astonishing. With another smile, the woman stepped up and clung to a bar. Then a man rose and gave her his seat. She took it with a little nod of thanks, and the hangers-on closed in about her.

It was a commonplace scene, and yet it carried its meaning. If that woman had been resentful or cold in her manner, she would never have secured that seat. Her geniality, absolutely without affectation, had made her way easy.

Not long ago I witnessed a scene that caused me some amusement. A handsomely dressed man, in a cutaway coat and a derby hat, carrying a stick, was walking along the street, very conscious of his importance. It happened, however, that his appearance was marred by a detail he was uncon-

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scious of. Presently another man, rather shabby looking, walked up to him and proceeded to speak. The man drew back resentfully, his face scowling. "I beg your pardon, sir," said the poorly dressed man, "but there is a dent in your derby hat." Instantly there was a collapse of dignity. The hat was torn off and restored to proper condition. The muttered thanks, however, were given ungraciously, with a suggestion of resentment.

That handsomely dressed man probably had many possessions valued by the world; but he was lacking in the finest possession of all, good disposition.

It is a pity that children are not taught the value of a good disposition. Perhaps the reason for the neglect is that so much insistence is placed on the qualities that, taken together, make up disposition. But there is something in disposition itself, in attitude, that ought to be made clear. If we have the wrong attitude, no matter how hard we may strive to cultivate certain good qualities, it is almost impossible for us to go through the day harmoniously and happily. The children of the rich, for example, receive a great deal of instruction in good behavior; and yet, so often we find among them the kind of attitude that makes good disposition impossible. Instinctively, they reject many of the things in life that help to maintain good will. In this regard we are all like the children of the rich. Through a false attitude, we are constantly putting ourselves out of harmony with people and with circumstance. If we could only maintain a genial attitude, if we could look at life in a way really well-disposed, we should find each day bathed in sunshine.

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Think of any two people that you know. Then reflect on the way they meet circumstances. Suppose they go through the same experience. Though the incidents may be the same, in their minds, the experiences are very different. Where there may be tragedy to one, to another there may be comedy. Where to one there may be pain, to the other there may be pleasure. Where one will be impressed by the more unpleasant features, the other will be impressed by the pleasant.

What happens in concrete instances, happens through the whole of life. If we have a bad disposition and carry it through life, we find it dis-coloring every day. If we have a good disposition and carry it through life, we find it giving to every day the same beauty. How foolish we are, then, not to cultivate right disposition, not to achieve the miracle that is bound to bring so many rewards.

I sometimes think of disposition as a kind of haze enveloping the world like the haze one sees in a theatrical performance. How beautiful the stage is when it is bathed in light. It will become even more beautiful when the light is made rose-color. Shadows will make it less beautiful. They may even blot out all the beauty. We sometimes speak of someone that we know in a way suggesting a realization of the power of disposition. We say that he looks at life through rose-colored glasses. Fortunate are those of whom such a remark can be made. So many of us look out on life with darkened vision. We think that the somber hue comes from life itself, whereas it comes, of course, from ourselves.

In this matter vision is a strange thing. There are so many things to see in life if we only care to

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see them. If we care for what is ugly, we are constantly finding ugliness. If we care for what is beautiful, we find ourselves continually surrounded with beauty. If we care for things to resent or to complain of, we cannot exhaust the source. It is curious to watch the complaining and the whining and the quarreling people. So much that they say is true. Often their grievances are impressive. For their wretched state of mind they may have ample justification. But their trouble may be a matter of emphasis. On the other hand, the faculty of seeing hateful things becomes so sharpened that it not only realizes everything that is hateful but it creates hatefulness of its own. The only way of escape is reaching an intelligent consciousness of the weakness of human nature and the imperfection of the world. The more we expect and exact, the greater must be our disappointment. The less we exact and expect, the greater must be our reward. Just as soon as our emphasis changes from receiving to giving, the world becomes transformed.

In this matter of happiness we have to contend with a great many established misconceptions. So often the people who, according to our logic, ought to be happy, are really miserable. On the other hand, the people that we should be likely to regard as inevitably miserable may have springs of happiness constantly bubbling within.

## TRAILS

**I**N our walks on the mountains we grow more and more familiar with the trails. All of them are wonderfully beautiful. Some are much harder than others. And yet the hard trails have their compensations. Occasionally we strike a trail that exacts a toll in damaged feelings, perhaps in bruises. Once we found ourselves on a trail that threatened to keep us in the wilderness for the rest of our lives. It finally put us completely to rout. After losing it and experiencing considerable perturbation of spirit, we struck it again only to retrace our steps very humbly, with a sense of our own weakness and folly, back to civilization.

After all, though the hard trails bring the rewards of adventure, the familiar trails are the best, worn with the tramp of many feet.

Human life seems to me a good deal like our tramping on the mountains. There are many trails. Some are easy and some are hard. Now and then one leads to the wilderness, perhaps to loneliness, perhaps to despair, perhaps to the isolation, pathetic and yet heroic, of the pioneer that prepares the way for others. In another sense, our walking is very different from the marching of mankind through life. It sometimes seems to me as if there were really no trails on the mountain that we all have to climb, as if each of us had to make his own trail. To be sure, we see trails made by others and they may serve us, provided we are wise enough to see, as warnings and as guides. Apart from such coun-

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sel, however, we have no help save in our faith and in the knowledge that we must keep moving and in our conviction that there is something worth while at the trail's end.

We all leave trails behind us, good or bad or both. Observe the quarrelsome people, for example. Wherever they go they stir up discord. It makes no difference whether they are well or ill, poor or rich, they are sure to keep repeating expressions of quarrelsomeness. Then there are the malicious people. Behind them they leave trails of malice. They are always creating mischief for themselves and for others. There are certain phrases that frequently come from their lips, each likely to do havoc. They include: "Now, there's something that I ought to tell you," and "What have you ever done to him that he hates you so?" and "I heard something about you the other day." Usually, these trail-makers are known and feared. But what they say is, to the thoughtless, at any rate, so interesting that they seldom lack an audience eager to co-operate in their mischief and to carry it on.

Then there are the trail-makers of punishment. Though they are full of weaknesses themselves, being human, they have no patience with the weaknesses of others. The others ought to be punished. They themselves, however, show great skill in dodging punishment. When punishment falls on them, as it frequently does, as a result of their own punishing, they feel terribly injured. Always they are to be found among those who are in favor of our prisons, as at present conducted, and who are bitter against law-breakers. They, too, have their phrases.

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Some of the more familiar are: "Hanging is too good for him," "He ought to be boiled in oil," and "He's got his just deserts." They talk a great deal about justice, which, almost invariably, they identify with punishment. If their trails could be followed with our eyes we should find long lines of havoc.

Fortunately there are other trails, far more beautiful. And, it should be borne in mind, that even the trails of the malicious and of the punishing people are not all ugly. They, too, have their beauty. The punishing people are often kind. Behind their cruelty there may be a devotion to an ideal none the less sincere because the ideal itself is false and hideous. And, as for malice, it is often accompanied by generous qualities, as well as by certain chastening experiences that, at moments, tend to make the malicious realize their unhappy state. Perhaps to be malicious brings its own torment. Far greater than the pain they cause others may be the pain they bring on themselves.

On this subject of trails, in some ways so depressing, in other ways so inspiring, there is one supremely consoling thought. Most of the people who pass along the great highway of life, showing the every-day qualities, hold pretty steadfastly to what orthodoxy calls the "straight and narrow path." Patiently and bravely they meet the trails of life. The common duties they perform modestly, without any consciousness of doing anything remarkable. As a rule, they receive little credit. They are not celebrated as heroes. And yet most of them repeatedly do heroic deeds.

## TRAILS

Perhaps what is hardest for all of us is the realization that we keep repeating ourselves. If we could only be someone else for a time. What a relief, both to ourselves and to those about us! As we look back, we can see that the trail each of us has made bears apparently the same characteristic marks. And, yet, we know that such is not really the truth. The change may not be apparent and yet it is unquestionably a real change. Every day we become different, either better or worse. What the trail does not show is our longing, our striving, our humiliation in the thought of our failures, our spirit, which may, indeed, be the only reality.

## GIVING AND HAVING

**I**N the balcony scene of "Romeo and Juliet," Shakespeare makes Juliet say:

"My bounty is as boundless as the sea,  
My love as deep. The more I give to thee  
The more I have, for both are infinite."

These lines beautifully express the miraculous nature of love. The more love gives, the more love has to give. Always love increases by giving. It is only when love ceases to give that it loses. The moment it becomes selfish its very life is in danger. Often love dies because of its exactions. But where love seeks always to give, it can never die. Perhaps here we may find the secret of Infinite Love. There are those who say that this law of love is the law of the universe.

Shakespeare knew, not merely because of his marvelous insight, but through his practice as well. For the more he wrote, the more he had to write about. Practice sharpened his insight, led him into greater richness of thought and fancy.

I once heard a distinguished writer talking about his work. He loved it passionately. Though he had long passed his sixtieth year, he used to say that he still retained his zest for writing. He had so many ideas that he couldn't keep up with them. He hoped that he might live for many years more so that he might go on writing books.

Someone asked him how he could explain his con-

## GIVING AND HAVING

tinued fertility of mind. "Oh," he replied with a laugh, "it isn't my mind that deserves credit. It's life. As one grows older life grows richer. There are more and more things to think about. So there are more and more things to write about."

The truth was, of course, that the more he practiced thinking and writing the finer grew his mind, the more capable of receiving and utilizing thoughts.

In other words, the more he gave out the more he had; the more he spent, the richer he became.

There are many nowadays who recognize in this law of increase. They apply it even to health. One man of my acquaintance says that he didn't learn how to live, he meant to live physically, till he had passed his fiftieth year. "Then I realized the meaning of the laws of health," he once said to me, "and I tried to follow them. The more I adapt myself the better the results. Now the more work I do the better I feel. I actually believe that with me, at any rate, the expenditure of energy increases the energy."

He was fairly bubbling with life. He had zest for living, just as the writer I have quoted had zest for writing. The more he exercised this zest the more power he acquired.

It is wonderful how much one can do by practicing what is wholesome. Consider sympathy, for example. The more sympathy one sends out, the more sympathy one has. Here, of course, I use the word in the sense of understanding, of the capacity to feel with others. The more one forgets oneself and feels with others, the greater one becomes. He ceases to be a mere individual. He becomes related to all humanity.

## GIVING AND HAVING

A friend some months ago found his eyes weakening. He tried to use them as little as possible. They grew weaker. Then he went to an oculist. The oculist, after making an examination, said: "What your eyes need is regular exercise. They have become flabby. You must read systematically each day for an increasing length of time." The oculist then indicated the time, beginning with a half hour and increasing five minutes a day till several hours had been reached.

You know, of course, about the blind fish that have been discovered in streams running through subterranean waters. Once fish of their kind had eyes. But generations of darkness made the eyes useless.

Our faculties are like our muscles. If we neglect them they weaken and perish. The more we use them the stronger they become and the more productive.

All life is like the Golden Gate. From one side it looks restricted and narrow. But beyond the confines of thought and aspiration and endeavor lies the open sea, inspiring, far-reaching, inexhaustible!

## THE SUBCONSCIOUS

A PRACTICAL man of affairs that I know has a great fondness for making fun of those he satirically calls the "artistic people." He has a very poor opinion of them. From his point of view he is quite right. They don't measure up to his standard. They are often not even interested in the things that he considers important. In his presence they display what must seem to him stupidity.

Indeed, under certain circumstances, there are few people in the world that seem so helpless as the artistic people. And yet, in their own sphere, they are keen enough. Sometimes they show an alertness that is almost uncanny. They see into aspects of life through avenues that, to many people, are impenetrable. They reason things out in ways that are often incomprehensible to themselves. Some of them, the conceited ones, incline to the belief that they are mysteriously inspired. But the truth probably is that when they perform their feats they are simply working in the subconscious, observing, reasoning, getting their effects through processes so easy and so swift that they are scarcely aware of what they are doing or wholly unaware. Of them it may be said, in the popular phrase, that they can do these things in their sleep.

In some ways we are all like the artistic people. The things we do best are often the things we can do in our sleep, the things we do when we are seemingly abstracted or perhaps actually engaged in doing something else.

## THE SUBCONSCIOUS

There is a popular actor who for several years played the same part. He once told me that at times he scarcely knew what he was doing. He was so tired of the character that it was a relief for him, while he was on the stage, to think of something else. And yet his work, apparently, remained the same. It did not even become mechanical. He had developed it to a high finish and he had then relegated it to the realm of the subconscious. There it remained, a beautiful expression of acting, and from there it could radiate out into the theater, controlling the actor even when he was giving to it only a part of his mind, or possibly none at all.

Sometimes women who are skilled housekeepers try to recall whether they did this part of the work or that at the close of the day, without being able to remember. They have to look to make sure whether the work is done. Then they are likely to be surprised to find that it is done well. They did it of course without thinking, subconsciously. Through making no exactations, it left no trace in the memory.

Here is one of the rewards of subconscious skill. Not only does it achieve without friction or effort, but with a minimum of expenditure.

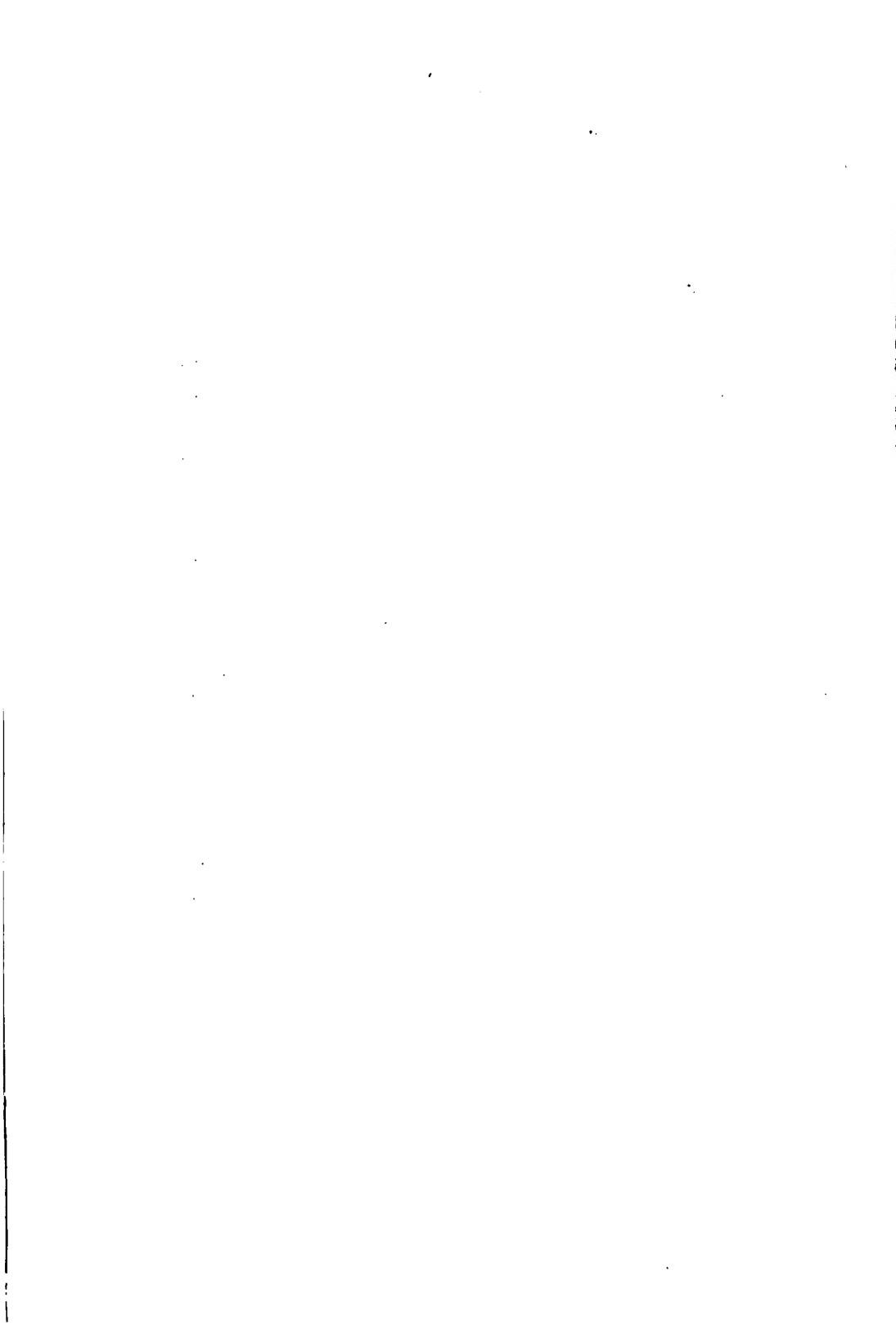
The subconscious is a treasure-house. It may also be the house of torment. Everything depends on the way we safeguard it. If we put there only what is good it will constantly work for our benefit. But if we let one bad thought get in, it may become an ill feeling, perhaps an evil impulse, a habit, to tyrannize over us and to torment us.

In the subconscious lies the real self. It may be very different from the imaginary creature that we

## THE SUBCONSCIOUS

present to the world. But every now and then it will quietly drive out the imaginary creature and assert itself. No matter how we may strive to hide it, when once it wishes to be seen, it will conquer. For this reason those of us who care for the opinion of the world ought to be solicitous about the subconscious, to make it fine and beautiful. The only way is to recognize the importance of reality, for, of all things in nature, the subconscious is the most real.

Those who keep the subconscious in a healthy state are likely to be not merely efficient, but healthy and youthful-looking and serene. For them the tasks of life are, not tasks, but diversions. It is as if they had tapped a fund of exhilarating and inexhaustible energy, as if they had established a relation with the resources of the infinite.



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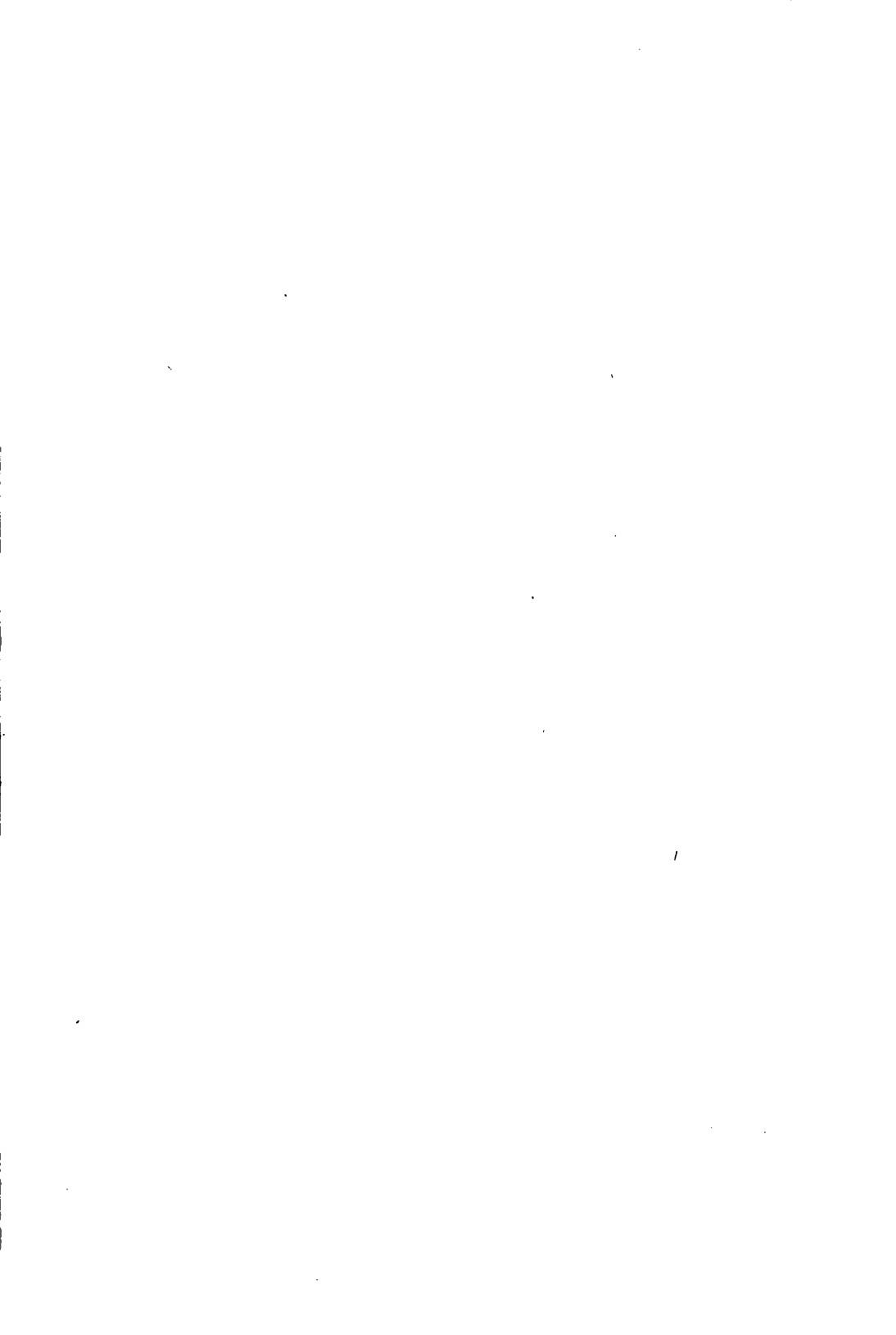
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